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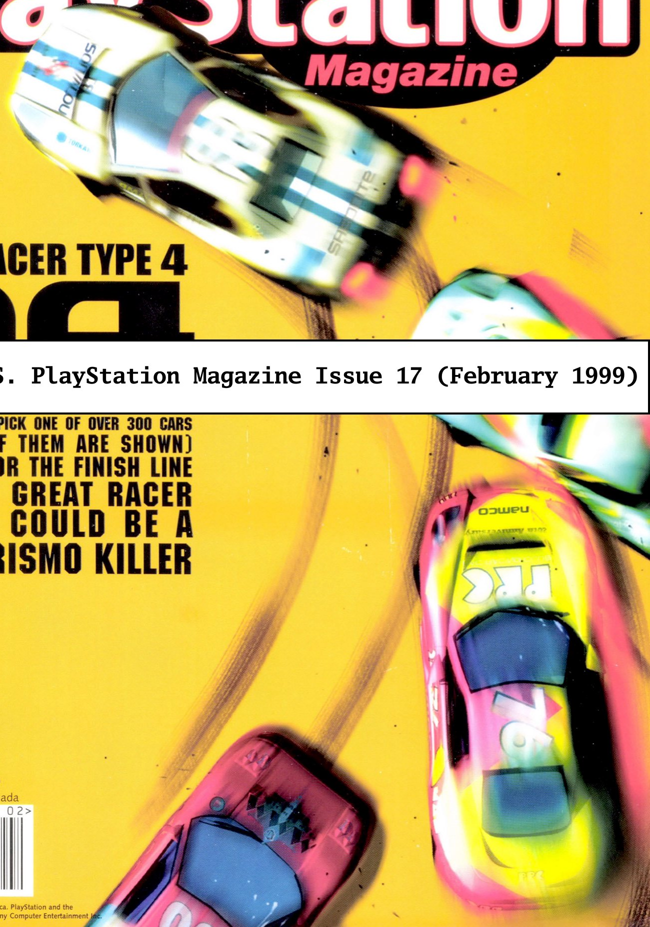
VOLUME 2
ISSUE 5

PlayStation

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine



RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 17 (February 1999)

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February 1999
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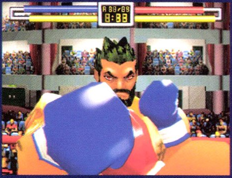
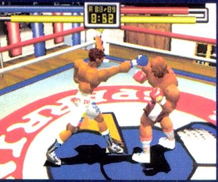


Holy Mackerel,
even my hair hurts.



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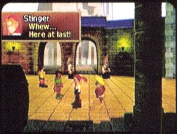
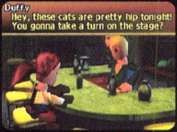

Stinger
Whew...
Here at last!


Duffy
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R1
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▸ Normal
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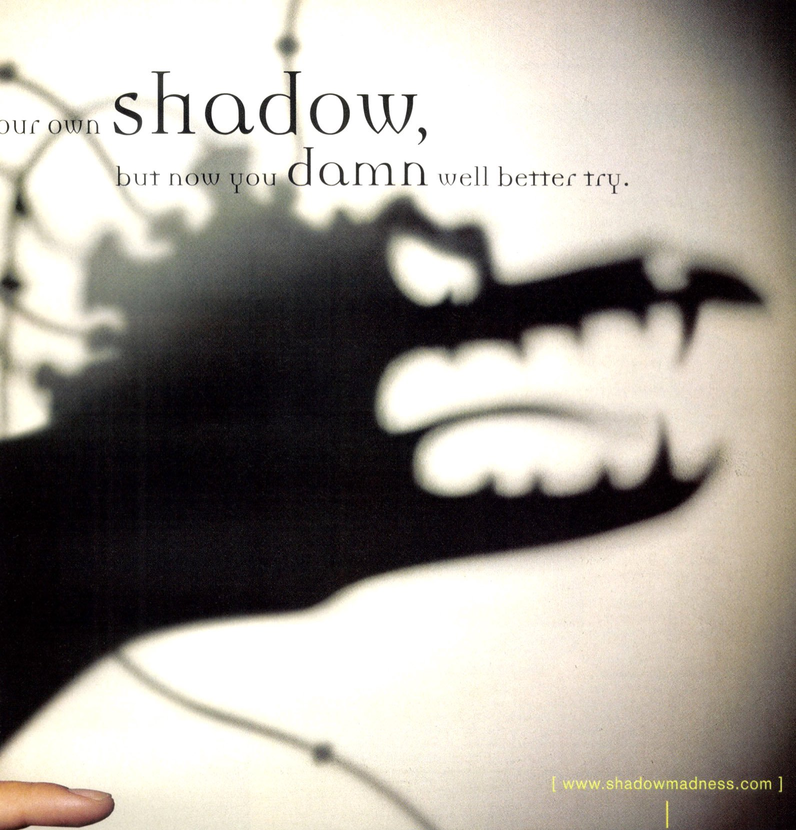
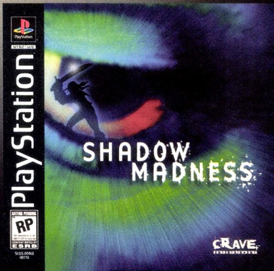
our own shadow,
but now you damn well better try.



[www.shadowmadness.com]

On Arkose, things aren't as they seem. A bizarre plague has swept the land, bringing vile creatures out of the shadows, and leaving piles of dust where your friends and relatives once stood. And you've got to put a stop to it before it puts a stop to you. It's an epic RPG with complex battle scenarios. Customizable weaponry. And three styles of magic. Because you're gonna need all the help you can get. Shadow Madness strikes in February 1999.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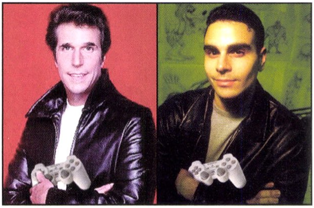
Editorial

A few unofficial words from the official editor-in-chief



If you need any more proof that the PlayStation is a cool system to have, look no further than these comparison shots between the Fonz and your friendly editor-in-chief.

By the Way, You're Officially Normal

Instead of my rambling on with the requisite new-year editorial that discusses how great the games of 1998 are, I think we should all take a look at the bigger picture—something that started brewing with the PlayStation in 1995 and is more apparent than ever in 1999: It's finally cool to play video games.

Yes, that's right. No more worrying about where you're going to hide the PlayStation when your date comes to your place, no more playing dumb when your friend brings up video games in front of your girlfriend, no more cringing with embarrassment when the attractive girl at the Best Buy counter rings up your PlayStation game...it's all right, don't sweat it, you're normal now. Well actually, you've always been normal, but playing video games might have tagged you as the opposite.

So how did I reach this profound bit of enlightenment? Well, hell, how could I *not* notice? For starters, it seems that half of the games I've been booting up lately use music from mainstream bands. Most of the bands that haven't let their music grace games have mentioned that their tour buses are loaded with PlayStations so they have something other than their instruments to play between tour stops. Next, I thumb through my vast array of sports magazines, and find there's usually at least one article or two in every one of them with a chatty professional athlete talking about his performance followed by "but I did well on the PlayStation." Heck, the hordes of bored NBA players have spouted off about how they're wearing down their controllers waiting for the lockout to end. Just look at all the professional athletes endorsing games. They're being paid handsomely, but trust me, most of those guys actually play the product they're pushing. If none of that evidence is strong enough for you, then I have a whopper in store for you: Leonardo DiCaprio reportedly has a dozen TVs in one house with a PlayStation attached to each one. How can you possibly argue against that?

Mission Statement

The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine is the only Sony Computer Entertainment America-licensed magazine and is published by ZD Inc. through an exclusive arrangement. As such, _OPM_ remains independent from SCEA, and is a critical, autonomous voice that helps readers get more out of their PlayStation system by delivering the most current, comprehensive and candid coverage of PlayStation software and hardware.

So how did this shift come about? Well, it took some gradual social conditioning achieved through excellent TV commercials, great games, spectacular hardware and a keen business sense. In short, Sony helped an immature market grow up while Nintendo was once again content to cater to it. Sure, most games are made (and reviewed) by people who really are kids at heart, but the rest of the population doesn't need to know that. All they need to know is that video gaming is socially acceptable and doesn't exist solely to entertain the stereotypical sweaty kid with greasy hair and a bad complexion (although that guy will probably beat them at any game nine out of 10 times).

Getting here was an arduous process, but damn it, we're here. So don't celebrate just 1998, but also the journey, the games and the game system that have gotten us here.

Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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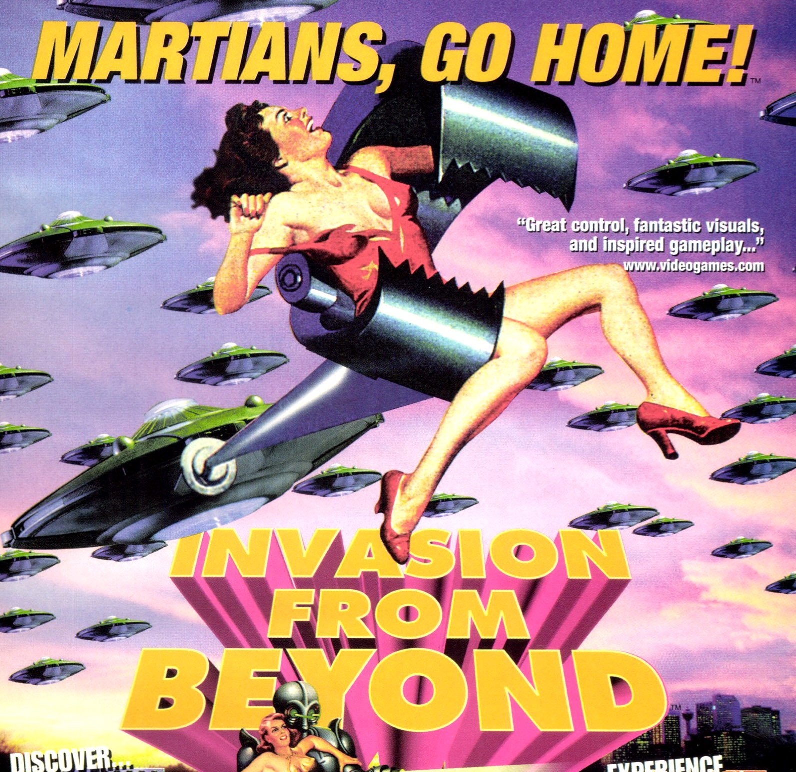

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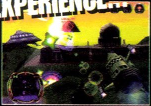

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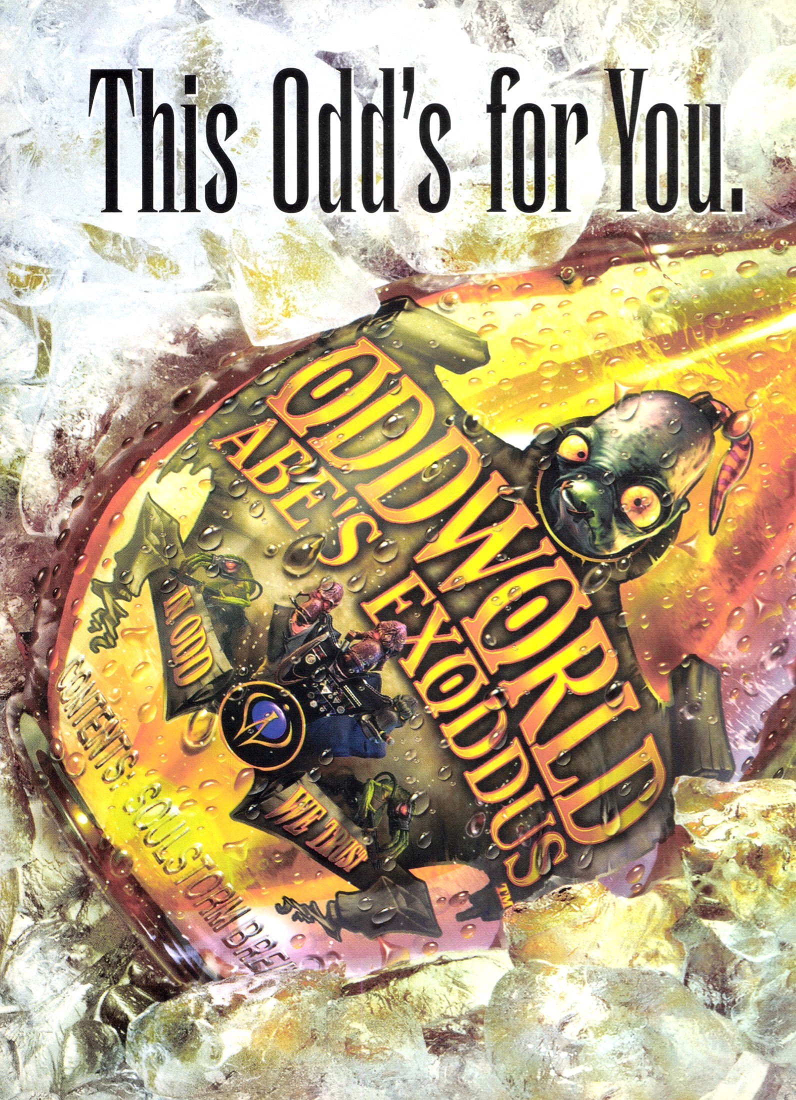
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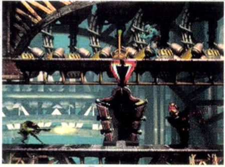

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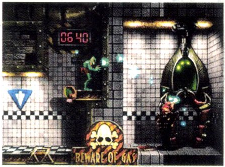

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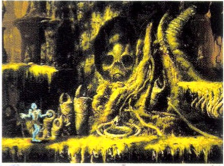
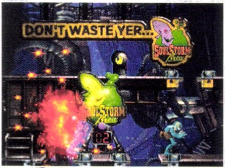


Abe gets all emotional! More panic! More talking! More pleading!



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THAMES SECRETS

#1 - From where the game starts, turn around and head to the crosswalk. Face the angled wall and take a running jump to clear it. Grab the Save Crystal and Shotgun Shells. Climb onto the raised block and take a running jump to the crane. Drop down onto the beam. Jump to the climbable wall, climb down and drop to the flat area below. Jump onto the roof and slide into the notched area of the sloped roof. Walk through the barbed wire and down the passage. The room at the end contains a Small Medi-pak and a Rocket.

#2 - Jump up and grab at the green door. Shimmy right and pick up Shotgun Shells and a Shotgun.

#3 - Jump across the pit and you'll be able to pull yourself up onto a roof with a Large Medi-pak. Go to the left and lower yourself to the area below with a Rocket.

#4 - Finding the Cathedral Key in Step 16 is the secret.

#5 - On the backside of the cathedral you'll find a climbable wall. Climb down and drop down a couple of boxes to find a crawlspace with a Large Medi-pak.

THAMES WHARF

1 From where you begin the level, go forward and drop down to the platform. Turn around and drop off the platform to the slanted roof below. Quickly jump and grab the ledge in front of you. Pull the switch and then use the zip line to cross the gap. Once across, prepare to grab. Drop and grab the next ledge below and shimmy to the right.

2 Dispose of the guard and enter the doorway. Make a standing jump to the next platform to avoid landing on the breakaway floor. Angle yourself away from the outcropping and take a running jump to the area across from you with the rats.

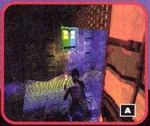
3 Follow the passage to the right and kill the guard you encounter. Search him for the Flue Room Key and return to the previous room. Look down and you will see a platform below on the left. Drop down and grab it. Pull yourself up to throw the switch on the wall. Take a running jump toward the wall you entered this room on and you will land on a ledge. Climb up through the open hatch and head back outside.

4 Pull the switch and you will lower the green platform. Drop down and you will be facing a green door (see Secret #2). Go to the left and climb through the crawlspace to the other side. Push the switch in front of you to open a case covering a later switch. Now return to the crawlspace and go back to the other side.

5 Once back on the other side, drop off the end of the walkway and you will slide down a sloped roof. This floor area has a guard roaming about and a Save Crystal in the far corner. When you are finished, climb up the progression of crates and climbable walls until you reach the very top.

6 Jump across the gap and take the short drop to the ledge below. Turn toward the opposite building and take a running jump to the rooftop (A). Drop to the small roof to the right and then grab the ledge. Shimmy all the way to the right and pull yourself up.

7 Go down the corridor to the right and jump across the gap. This is the area you crawled out into in Step 5. Continue forward, climb up to find a switch that will lower the scaffolding. Go back to the area between the buildings and take a running jump to the scaffolding (B). Jump across to the door and use the Flue Room Key (C).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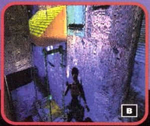
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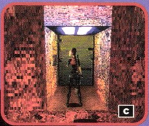
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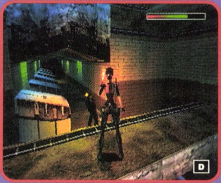
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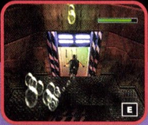
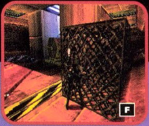
8 Run straight across the room to the Save Crystal and then turn to the left to find a switch. Push the switch and two flame spurts will block your exit. There is a safe zone between them, so time yourself carefully. Once back outside, drop off the left side of the scaffolding and head for the crawlspace to return to the first area.

9 Retrace your steps following Steps 6 and 7, but this time climb the wall in front of you instead of going to the right. There was a flame in the pit you arrive at, which you put out while in the Flue Room (see Secret #3). Now drop down into the pit.

10 Slide down the chute and jump across the gap. Continue forward past some pesky rats and drop down into the room (D). There are two rooms down the long corridor which can be filled with water. Throw the switch and go to the second room, which is now filled with water. Dive and pull the lever (E), opening a trap door in the first room.

11 Return to the first switch you threw in this area and hit it again to slow down some blades you'll encounter in the hatch. Go to the first room and swim down the hatch past the blades. When you emerge





you will be met by a guard. Kill the rats inside the crawlspace and go through.

12 The next area is patrolled by a robot with flailing electrical wires. Avoid them at all costs. Head to the back-right corner to find a Save Crystal and a switch to turn on the lights. Now find the moveable box on the opposite side of the room. Pull the box out and then push it all the way to the right. Continue to push it forward until it blocks the path on the left (F). As the robot comes around, it'll hit the switch and stop. Exit the room and climb the wall to where you started this area.

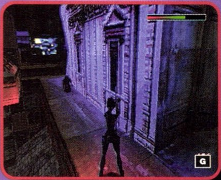
13 Throw the newly uncovered switch and the same switch you've thrown twice so far. Go to the second room and swim to the door on the left wall. Follow the hall and dive into the pool. Exit the pool and kill the guard, throwing the switch inside the room he came from. The last switch is now uncovered. Use the grated ceiling to cross the now drained pool. The path leads to the second water room. Time to throw that final switch.

14 Go back to the second water room and through the door on the left. The room has been refilled and the trap door at the bottom is open. Swim down the long tunnel until you emerge into a huge chamber. Pull yourself out at the small opening and climb the wall to the top.

Walk through the barbed wire and jump to the platform on the crane. Turn to the right and make a running jump and grab the roof. Walk through the barbed wire and jump up the sloped roof until you reach the level area.

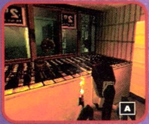
15 After disposing of the guards (G), enter the cathedral and pull the blue block forward twice. Climb up, turn right and climb up to the small roof. Take a running jump across to the opposite roof and you'll find the Cathedral Key (see Secret #4).

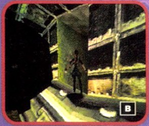
16 On the back side of the cathedral is a fence (see Secret #5). Go through the opening in the center of it to finish the level.



ALDWYCH

1 The level begins with a long drop. Hold the Grab button on your way down to climb into an alcove with Shotgun Shells. Drop into the water below and head up the stairs. Shoot through the broken grating with the Save Crystal behind it and climb up to the rafter area, where you'll find a cache of items. Shoot the guard and then pull the block in the corner. Now drop down the hole in the floor onto a ticket booth.





2 Look above the ticket booths to find the one with the block you moved. Climb up and follow the path until you drop behind the ticket counter (A). Grab the Maintenance Key and exit the room using the switches.

3 Take the right escalator down to the tracks and do a running jump across to the dirt-covered ground. Shoot the guard walking his dog and go to the door beside the tracks. Stay off the tracks unless you want to get hit by the 5:15 from London. Use the Maintenance Key to open it, collect the items and hit the switch to turn the lights on. On the opposite end of the platform you'll see an Old Penny you need to pick up. Head to the gap you jumped to reach this area and drop down to the tracks below. You will see a green light down one side, but you want to go in the other direction. Dash quickly to beat the oncoming train to the opening in the wall to the right (B).

4 The red room you entered houses a couple of thugs you need to deal with. Climb the crates and locate the Save Crystal in the corner. Pull yourself up and take a running jump across the ramp. You'll find a hole in the crates with a switch you need to hit, lighting the room to point out a hatch in the roof. As you climb out of the hole you will see a grated wall. Climb up and backflip off of it. Climb the block behind you (watch out for that thug) and jump forward to grab the ceiling, following it around.

5 The opening in the wall to the right will put you on the edge of a deep pit. As soon as you hit the slope a giant drill will begin to descend. Drop into the hole backward and grab the edge. Drop to the breakaway floor below, side-jump to the left and jump across to grab the opposite ledge. Drop to the breakaway floor below (you'll take some damage). When the floor breaks,

ALDWYCH SECRETS

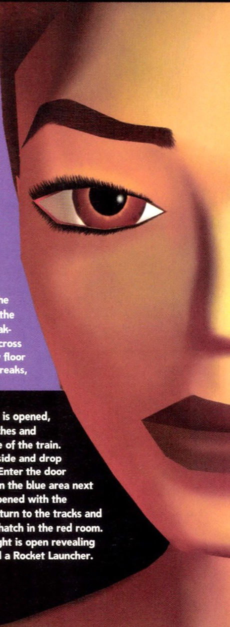
#1 - Having safely landed, turn your back to the hole. Face the wall to the right on an angle and hop backward while holding the Grab button. You will land below to find a Save Crystal and MP5 Clips.

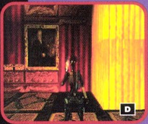
#2 - At the bottom of the left escalator you will find another grate in the wall you can shoot out. Inside are some Shotgun Shells.

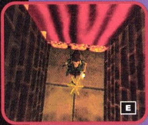
#3 - Opening the door with the Ornate Key reveals a secret area. Climb the wall inside the room and follow the path around to a Save Crystal. You'll emerge just before where you entered the last ticket area.

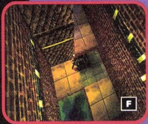
#4 - After using the Masonic Mallet, climb up to the area above the switch to find a hidden Rocket.

#5 - After the door is opened, push the two switches and return to the inside of the train. Push the switch inside and drop through the door. Enter the door that opened back in the blue area next to the room you opened with the Masonic Mallet. Return to the tracks and climb through the hatch in the red room. The door on the right is open revealing a load of items and a Rocket Launcher.







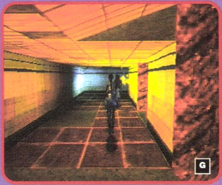


grab as you slide down the sloped wall. Pull yourself up and backflip to the ledge behind you (see Secret #1).

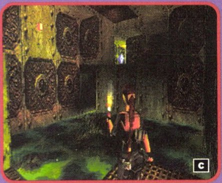
6 Climb up to the room with the climbable wall. Shimmy to the right when you reach the flames. Climb up just before the first flame stops, jump forward and grab the ledge directly in front of you. Continue up to the next grated wall and climb it. Backflip from the wall into the nook with a switch, pushing it to open the roof hatch in the red room. Continue around and up until you reach the room with the rafters. Grab the Large Medi-pak in the corner and drop down to the base of the right-side escalator.

7 Drop back down to the tracks and return to the red room. First, climb back up to the drill and climb into the opening in the back corner to find the first of Solomon's Keys. Follow the passage out and return to the red room to check that hatch. Shoot the guard and his dog and head through to the breakable floor. Pull the block, climb out and enter the other hole in the floor. Follow the path through the crawlspace and climb into the green-lit halls. Follow the corridor until you reach two switches, and push the right one. Dash down the corridor into the room with the pool and the three doors. The second and third door will open briefly. Race into the third room and push the switch. Return to the switches and hit the right one again, this time running into the middle room. Climb through the hatch and push the switch, closing a grate up ahead. You will drop down right in front of the two switches. Push the left one and race into the final room (C). Climb the block and grapple across the ceiling. At the end, drop and grab the ledge to find the second one of Solomon's Keys and some items. Swim through the passage in the pool to exit. You will end up in the ticket booth area.

8 Use the Old Penny on the ticket booth with the #1 on top of it to get a Ticket. Now head down the the left escalator. At the bottom (see Secret #2) you will find another thug to deal with. Head down the tracks to the right and another thug will appear. Dash after him into the door he opens to avoid the oncoming train. Push the switch and grab the Save Crystal from the door that the thug emerged from.



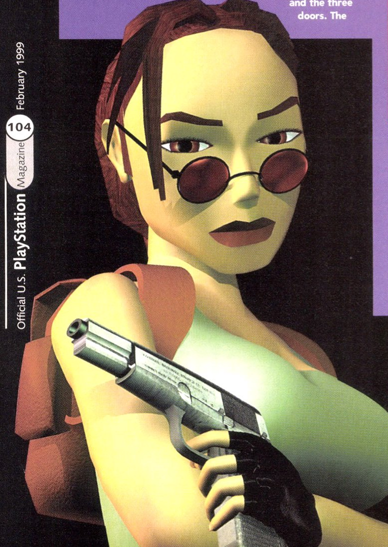
9 Now continue down the tracks to a third door. Push the switch and you'll face a small puzzle involving a bunch of doors and switches. Go straight ahead and hit the switch on the left next to the painting of a handshake. Turn around and head toward the water. Take a right into the rectangular room and throw the switch on the far left. Turn around and go all the way forward and then to the left. Turn to the right and follow the corridor around until you see the torch light.



10 This large room is scattered with floor traps. Look for the one to the left of the door blocked by swords. Jump through the curtain to find an Ornate Star (D and E). Use both of Solomon's Keys to open the door blocked with swords. Grab the Masonic Mallet inside the room. Now go to where you used the keys to find a room revealed with a pool. Swim through to the next area (F).

11 Climb the blocks to reach the small opening in the wall and use the Ticket to open the gate. Go to the left of the flaming ticket booth and open the door with the Ornate Key (see Secret #3). Once through the crawlspace and the door, return to the new ticket area.

12 Go down the escalator and use the Masonic Mallet to open the door. Push the switch to open a trapdoor (see Secret #4). Drop down to the blue area outside the room. Pass by the door that opens and drop through the hole. Crawl into the next area and climb through the trapdoor in the ceiling. Push the switch and drop through the hatch that opens. Run down the hall toward the blue light. A guard will appear (G), but don't shoot him if you are interested in the last secret (see Secret #5). Follow him until he opens a door further up. If you're ready to move on, the sloping path ahead is the level exit.



LUD'S GATE SECRETS

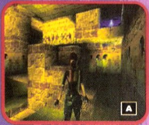
#1 - Walk out into the giant cavern and go to the far right. Lower yourself from the brick area and drop to the ledge below. Shimmy to the right into the crawlspace to receive a Large Medi-pak and some Flares.

#2 - On the climbable wall, stop at the area with the red light on the left side of the wall. Do a 180-backflip-into-a-grab to find a Rocket Launcher or a Rocket.

#3 - Facing the back of the sphinx, go to the left corner and take a hop

LUD'S GATE

1 Head down the guarded hallway to the room with two pools. Take the left-hand door and slide down the path. Quickly climb up the right wall to avoid the lowering spikes. Push the switch to open the hatch above (see Secret #1). Scale the climbable wall (see Secret #2) and crawl into the passageway. Take the path to the right and drop into the room. Move the block to the opposite wall and exit the room. Kill the guard and enter the large room to the right (A).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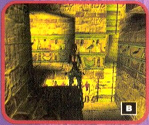
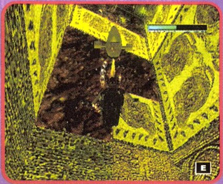

B

2 Climb the ladder into a room with another block and push it in front of the doorway. Return to the main room. The tall block has moved in front of the door. Climb up it to reach the ledge to the left. Exit through the crawlspace and go back to the first block you moved and pull it back. Return to the large room and climb the tall block. Run and jump to the right and grab the ceiling. On the left is a Save Crystal and on the right is switch you must push. Climb up to the middle level and throw the switch there (B), completing the ladder to the right. Climb to the top and make your way around the ceiling to the left until you reach the open door.

3 Slide down the slope to the breakaway floor and do a standing jump across the gap to get the Embalming Fluid. Climb through the crawlspace into the hall and find another crawlspace in the darkened corner. Kill the guards and drop down to the platform overlooking the sphinx. Get the Save Crystal and drop onto the top of the sphinx (see Secret #3). Work your way down to the ground level and head up the stairs. Grab the ledge above (see Secret #4) and pull the block forward. Climb up it to the opening on the right. You'll end up in between two blocks. Push one block forward and then pull the other one. This will leave you above the stairs. Go back around and you will find yourself back at the very beginning of the level.

4 Go to the room you started in and use the Embalming Fluid in the lit alcove. Make the long drop down to the water and grab the underwater propulsion unit, or UPU. Go forward and take care of the alligator with your harpoons. There is a small cave off to the right with an air pocket, allowing you to explore the area for items. When finished, follow the lights to the open chamber on the left.

5 Dive into the next pool and swim to the back of the tunnel to find a lever. Pull it and swim back to the open hatch in the ceiling. Push the switch to open the gate back in the tunnel. Here's the trick: *If the frogman sees you, he will take off on a much-needed UPU.* You have to catch him off-guard. Make an immediate left when you swim into the new area and go all the way to the end. Climb out and up to the walkway (the frogman is over your right shoulder). Sneak along with you back to the wall and backflip over the sloped rock when the frogman is looking away (C). Enter the opening in the back left corner and dash straight off the edge past the guard. You don't have to jump, and when you land blast the frogman in the water (see Secret #5). The other guard has a Boiler Room Key you need (D). The area is strewn with ammo and Medi-paks, so do a thorough search before leaving on the UPU (see Secret #6).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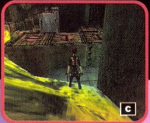
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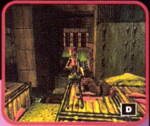
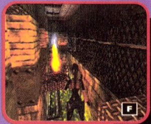

D

6 Exit the area through the long tunnel until you reach an immense underwater cavern. Watch out for the diver and an alligator. From where you entered this cavern, go to the room in the top corner on the right side. This gold-colored room is your only source of air, so make a note of it (E). Swim into the lower room just below the red brick room and pull the lever. Head to the green-lit room on the second level and swim through the door you opened and pull the next lever. From the air room, swim straight across to the red room and pull the lever inside. This will open a hatch and release a couple of divers to contend with. Return for some air and then enter the room just to the right of it. Swim through until you reach the top of the vertical climb.

7 Exit the waterfall pool and jump into the water below the fire platforms (F). Pull the lever and then cross the platforms until you reach the pistons. Time yourself carefully to pass them and then continue to the end of the walkway. Run and jump to grab the ceiling and enter the small opening behind the waterfall (G). Use the Boiler Room Key and then push the switch to open the last door back in the large cavern.

8 Head straight for the second red room and through the hatch, ending the trip with another vertical climb. There is no longer any air available, so be quick about it. Once topside, take a step back from the left side of the platform and do a standing jump forward. Two running jumps in succession will get you to the other side.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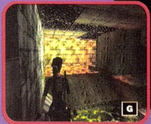
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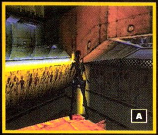
9 Kill the guard and climb into the opening on the left wall. At the end of the tunnel, run and jump across, grabbing the ledge across the way. Drop and grab the next opening and climb inside. At the end of this tunnel, do another running jump to the opening across from you. Climb inside and crawl to the end of the level.


A

back (A). Now jump forward to land on a platform. Jump to the tall pillar in front of you and then make a running jump to the angled block to the left. Climb up, slide down the slope and jump to the walkway leading to a Save Crystal and a Rocket.

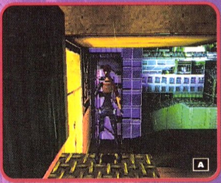
#4 - From the ledge above the stairs, turn around and jump to the small opening to find a Rocket and a Large Medi-pak.

#5 - In the water where you shot the frogman is a room that's most gratifying. Inside you'll find a Save Crystal, some Harpoons, a Large Medi-pak and a UPU.

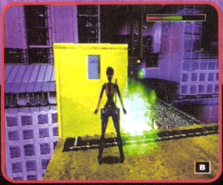
#6 - In the pool where you first entered this area is a small opening containing some Desert Eagle Clips.

CITY

1 Follow Sophia out onto the rooftops. Don't worry about shooting her; she needs to be disposed of another way. Run up the ramp and climb the ledge. Turn around and you'll see a grated ceiling. Once across, climb the block to the left and climb on top of the walkway you just used to cross (see Secret #1). Head to the right and press the switch at the end of the walkway. Return to the way you came and go to the left. A trapdoor has been opened above this area (A). Climb through the trapdoor and climb up two levels to another long walkway.



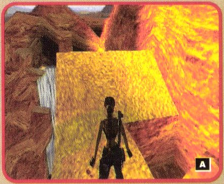
Head to the right and jump to the grated wall (make sure Sophia's recharging or you'll get nailed). Crawl through the small opening at the top, turn around and climb up onto the block. Take a running jump to the ledge in front of you and grab it. Get behind the block where there's a switchbox and shoot it to fry Sophia (B). The walkway that leads to her is electrified, so head back the way you came. Turn to the left and jump across to the side where Sophia was shooting from. Work your way around, climbing around to the right until you see a switch. Push it and then grab the much-deserved Eye of Isis.



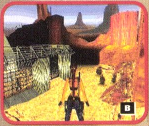
CITY SECRETS

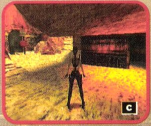
#1 - From this point, climb over the block to the left and hang from the ledge. Shimmy to the left and drop to the opening. Crawl inside to find a Rocket and a Small Medi-pak.

NEVADA DESERT



1 Run down the canyon past the small pool and follow it around until you emerge high above the pool (see Secret #1). Walk to the end of the ledge in front of the green metal structure and take a running jump across to the opposite ledge. Follow it around until it ends and jump to the sloped rock to the left. Grab on, shimmy to the left and drop down. From the highest point of this rock, turn to the left and jump to the main rock, which leads back to the green structure.





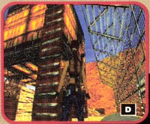
2 Drop down the hole into the water and head to the large canyon with a river running through it. The river bed is scattered with two boxes of Shotgun Shells, two Uzi Clips and Flares. Return to the top when done to continue. Look for a small triangular ledge to jump to on your right as you look over the river. Work your way along the right side until you can go no farther. Jump across the river to the climbable wall and pull yourself up (see Secret #2). Go to the left and jump across toward the bush. One more jump will put you in front of a short but steep slope (A). Angle yourself slightly toward the right and jump over the slope and be ready to grab. This will put you in an area with a detonator, which we'll be back for later.

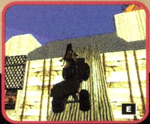
3 Climb down the wall near the detonator and get off on the first ledge to the left. Climb up the tall wall next to the waterfall and backflip off to a ledge at the top. Jump to the back of the sloped ledge, slide down it and jump across. Shimmy to the right and drop to sloped rock, flipping back to a rock in the river. Jump across the rocks to solid ground (see Secret #3).

4 Climb to the top of the large yellow aqueduct and follow it to the reservoir. Dive in, but don't swim out of the gray area or you'll get caught in the current. Right before the aforementioned area is a lever that opens the grate behind you, revealing some Desert Eagle ammo. Swim to the opposite corner and pull the lever there, opening the grate between the two waterfalls. Swim just inside this tunnel and look in front of you to find another, easily missed lever. Pull it and the next lever you see just around the corner and swim to the top of the tunnel. Climb out of the water and throw the switch, which raises the elevator back at the beginning of this area and also redirects the water. The area you drained has some items to collect. Then head to the elevator. Inside is the Detonator Switch. Once you have it, head back the way you came to the explosives in the canyon.

5 Use the Detonator Switch and move to the side to avoid a boulder you jarred loose. Climb up to the ledge you created in the cave and work your way around to the compound (B). Outside the fenced area, climb into the small opening near the fence. When you come to a short drop, jump to the ledge above and follow the path to a pool. Drop in and pull the lever inside. Now head back outside and to the large cave.

6 Through the cave you will find the door you opened with the last lever, right next to a pair of rattlesnakes (C). Pull the switch inside and return to the small opening and the area you didn't explore (D). Climb up the water tank and jump in. Swim into the tunnel and pull the lever. Return to the first room and climb out. Take a running jump out of the door overlooking the compound. Clear out the guards and then grab the ATV in the warehouse. Drive up the ramp onto the roof (E), stopping to pick up the Generator Access card. Use the card in the other building to shut off that electric fence. Open the gate and drive into the cave. Jump over the fence to finish the level.



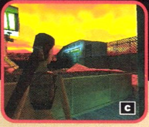


NEVADA SECRETS

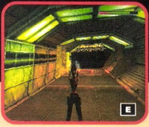
#1 - At the first slope downward while in the canyon, slide down backward and grab the edge. Shimmy all the way to the right and drop down to avoid the barbed wire. Collect the Small Medi-pak, the Flares and the Save Crystal.

#2 - From the top of the climbable wall, climb all the way to the bottom and shimmy to the right to find the area concealing Desert Eagle and MP5 Clips.

#3 - Crawl underneath the large overhang on the left, just across the river. Climb inside to find a rattlesnake and some Uzi Clips.

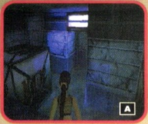

C

D


E

HIGH SECURITY COMPOUND

1 This is a fine mess. You've been stripped of your weapons. Trigger the laser in the window to have a guard open the door. Run across the center walkway and hit the switch on the far right to release the prisoners to deal with the guard. Find the corner cell with the block behind the sink and push it once. Crawl to the left and push the next block once. Turn to the right and push this block twice (see Secret #1). Look up and climb through the opening.

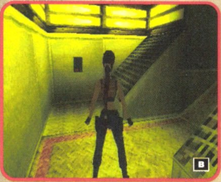

A

2 Go to the end of the corridor and push the switch. Climb down the ladder and stop off at the area on the left. Drop through the trapdoor into the area below. Enter the glass control room and hit the switch to release the prisoners from the holding area. After they've killed the guard, get the Shotgun Shells and Keycard Type A. Use the card to open the gate to Bay D. Go straight to the end and take a left. Open the door to the john and then hit the switch to open the next door. Move the box in a square pattern until it lines up under the opening in the ceiling (A). The switch in this room will fill the area below with water. Get out of the room through a hole in the back-right corner. Jump over the pit of fire and head outside.

3 Run down the corridor, jumping over pits until you drop down into a room. Push the switch back in the yellow area to turn off the gas to the stove and then open the door (B). Now climb back onto the roof and drop through the hole where the flames used to be. Push the switch next to the door and exit the kitchen. Push the switch on the right to open the door to the mess hall, then open the control room door. The inmates will take care of the guard. The switch inside the control room raises the grates next to the fans in the kitchen. Slide down the slope and jump to grab the ledge. Shimmy left, drop and jump to the platform. Crawl through the opening and climb the ladder. A prisoner will open the hatch in the roof. Continue around and up until you emerge in the green-lit halls of Bay E.

4 Run up the ramp and go to the left, dropping down to a cell area to release a prisoner to deal with the guard (C and D). Get the Keycard Type B he drops and return topside. Use the card to open the door and push the switch to turn off the green motion sensors. Climb down the deep drop and out into the courtyard. Turn down the hallway to your immediate left and release the prisoners. Head back out to the yard and collect the Yellow Security Pass dropped by the guard, using it to open the door to the plane hangar.

5 Slide down the slope, hop over the platform and hit the switch to open the door and trigger a red laser. Get through the door and follow the path to a huge satellite tower. Take the stairs up and enter the opening in the left wall. Drop down into the control room, push the switch to move the satellite dish and then climb to the top of the tower. Drop down the hole and swim up to the platform. Jump toward the darkened bars and then around the perimeter of the room until you reach a crawlspace. Throw the switch at the end to open a door outside. Return to the water and swim through the opening in the corner. Crawl through the pitch-black corridor and run to the right to avoid the guard. Climb the first ladder on the left. Follow the path, climb the next ladder and head to the right in the next area. Enter the crawlspace and grab the Yellow Security Pass. Return to the first ladder you climbed and continue into the control room. Use the key to stop the propeller in the water. Climb the ladder in this room and dive in.


B

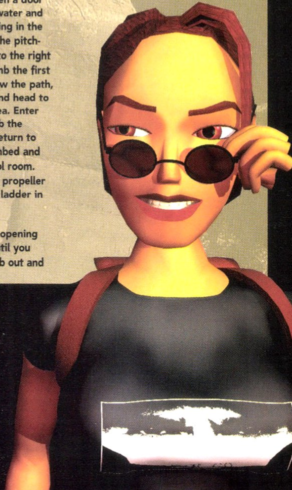
6 Swim through the opening and down the tunnel until you emerge in a room. Climb out and jump to the red area and get back in the water. Swim through and enter the warehouse. Climb the crates to the left and you will find a room with a Large Medi-pak, a Desert Eagle with ammo and your Pistols. The door you entered is now guarded by auto-guns. Destroy them or sprint past them and then head up the ramp (see Secret #2). After dealing with the guards you should end up with a Blue Security Pass (E). Climb the ladder and use the key, pressing the right switch once inside.

7 Return to the warehouse area and climb to the ceiling. Use the grating to cross to the walkway. Climb up and kill the guard to get the Yellow Security Pass. Return to the bay doors and open them. Once outside, kill the guards and hide away in the back of the truck.

COMPOUND SECRETS

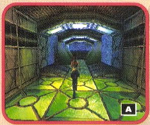
#1 - After pushing the block twice, turn around and pull the last block back twice. Crawl through and you will find a Small Medi-pak.

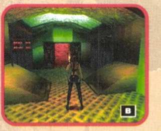
#2 - Return to the area outside the tower and then head back to the ladder located on the wall. Climb up, kill the guard to get the Keycard Type B, and use it to open the door with some Grenades in it.



AREA 51 —

1 Immediately shoot the guard you see or he'll trip the alarm. Get the MP5 and some ammo in the armory, then hit the switch on the wall. Crawl through the opening and watch out for the laser beams. When you emerge into a corridor, shoot the guard before he hits the alarm. From the corridor, crawl through the opening on the right to get past the gun mounts. Throw the switch at the end to drop into the yard below and kill the guard quickly (see Secret #1). Look in the green crawlspace to find a Grenade Launcher and then drop into the center area. Push the switch and drop through the trapdoor. Crawl through to the next trapdoor and drop down (A).



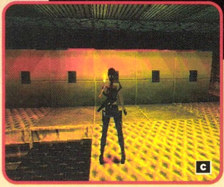


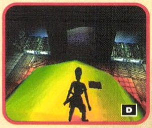
2 Shoot the guard and release the prisoner by the red light. Head in the other direction and crawl through the opening on the left to avoid the corner guns. Go down the ramp and head for the doors. When you are close, the two side doors will open releasing two guards (B). Push the switch on the left and crawl through the open grate. Head up the ramp and to the right. Kill the guard in the silo and get the Code Clearance Disc. Head back to the intersection and go to the left. Use the disc to move the missile and climb up to the rafters (see Secret #2). Kill the guard to get Hangar Access Key.

3 Walk back past the silo until you come to a door. Use the Hangar Key here to enter the room and drop down onto the tracks. Go all the way to the left and climb the ladder. Push the switch to move the monorail. Crawl under the tracks by the train, climb the ladder and jump to the roof of the train. Grab the ledge above and head down the corridor, making sure to grab the ceiling the first chance you get (the second grated floor will drop you to your death). Once across the tracks, head up the winding corridors until you reach the room with the alien craft. Continue around the room until you reach the central computer room.

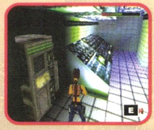
4 You need to open the doors by solving a puzzle. Face the double doors and turn to jump to the platform on the left. Hit the switch and go as quickly as you can to the opposite switch. There's no time to shoot the guards, so get ready to take some hits. When both sets of doors are open, run into the next room. You'll see five switches. From the left, pull #2, #4 and #5 to open the doors to access the UFO (C). Return to the computer room and then head to the UFO.

5 In the UFO room, press the switch in the back right corner and climb the ladder. Jump across the rafters to the right until you can drop down to the platform that leads out to the UFO. Drop down and grab the Launch Code Pass (D). Return to the missile silo and drop through the hole in the floor. Open the door and run into the room with the covered switch. Use the Launch Code Pass to open it and hit the button. Make a quick turn around into the room behind you to avoid getting flamed as the missile launches.





6 Climb to the top of the empty silo and open the door. Crawl through the laser-guarded duct and out into the guarded yard. Kill the guards and enter the room to the right to get Code Clearance Disc from the guard inside. Pull the switch to open the trapdoor in the yard and drop down it. Follow the path until you find yourself in the corridor leading to the UFO. Head into the room on the other side of it and use the Code Clearance Disc (E). You've opened the door outside, which leads to a room with huge water tanks holding orcas. There are also some Desert Eagle ammo and Flares inside.



7 Return to the UFO room (see Secret #3) and climb into the hatch underneath it. Climb up the several levels of the ship, dealing with a few guards along the way. At the top level you will find the another artifact. Grab Element 115 and the level will end.

AREA 51 SECRETS

#1 - If the guard throws a switch, you'll never enter the secret area. Drop down the center through the trapdoor and crawl through the grate to get the Save Crystal.

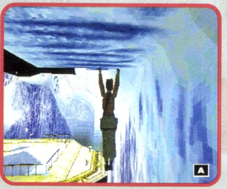
#2 - After using the Code Clearance Disc, climb up the platform behind you with the mechanical arm. Shoot out the grate on the wall and follow the path down to the Save Crystal.

#3 - Climb the ladder and take the rafters around to the right. From where you normally drop to the platform, jump to the next rafter. Make a running jump to the door on the hall ahead and follow it to the orca tank. There's a Save Crystal inside the tank.

ANTARCTICA

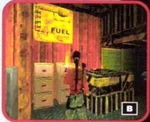
1 Climb onto the block next to you and do a running jump to to small ice patch in the water. Now run and jump to the area to the right with the building on it. Keep going straight and jump across the water to the other side. Follow the path until you see a narrow strip of ice across the water. Dive in and and swim to it quickly. The warmth meter will go down fast, leaving Lara little time to spend in the icy water. Continue until you reach the back wall of this area and climb up to the notched ice to grapple across (A). Drop down at the end and jump to the tanker.

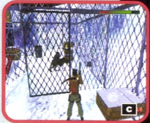
2 Enter the hull area and kill the two guards. Head to the engine room and pull the switch next to it. It opens a hatch just behind you. Drop down and follow the hall until you reach a door. In the next room, go to the back by the pipes and drop down the hole. Follow the path to the switch, which drops boat into the water. Head back to the previous room and climb up the opening in the ceiling. Follow the path to the next switch, opening the door to the deck (see Secret #1). Drop into the water and climb into the boat.



3 Take the boat along the narrow passage between the ship and the ice wall. Turn past the building and through the ice tunnel (see Secret #2). Continue through to the deck and get out to deal with the guard. Climb the block behind the building and grapple your way across the water to the other side. Run through the tunnel to reach the compound and watch out for thugs and dogs. Head down the dark tunnel and push the switch on the building to the left. Go down the tunnel just past the pipes and enter the building with the closing doors. Go all the way through the building until you see the Crowbar on the block. Pick it up and return to the area on the other side of the dark tunnel.

4 Climb up the tower and use the Crowbar to open the door. Make sure to pick it up again once you are done. Pull the switch in the tower and then grapple across to the other building. Enter the hatch and check out the diagram of the pipe valves on the wall (B). Pull the switch and exit the room. Drop down the hole with the pipe and enter the room with the four valves. Turn the second and the fourth valve as Lara enters the room. Climb the ladder and throw the switch in the now open generator room. Doors with a green switch next to them can now be opened. Go to the area with chain-link fence and the dogs (C). Enter the building to find the Gate Control Key in the corner.





ANTARCTICA SECRETS

#1 - Once on deck, run down the right side until you see an opening in the ice. Jump to the opening to find a Save Crystal and MP5 Clips.

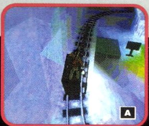
#2 - In the ice tunnel, stop at the opening in the left wall. Climb up the ladder and jump across the water as you slide down the slope. You will find a Large Medi-pak inside.

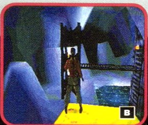
#3 - At the first flag you see, dive into the water and swim into the small alcove. You will find the Hut Key here. Go back to the hut by the tanker and go inside to find a Save Crystal and some Flares.

5 Return to the area where you left the boat and use the Crowbar to get into the control room. Use the Gate Control Key and hit the switch to open the gate. Get back into the boat and head through the gate (see Secret #3). Follow the waterway all the way to the end. Get out and take the path until you reach the building. Go around to the back of the building to end the level.

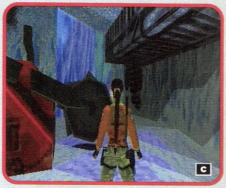
RX-TECH MINES

1 Climb out of the elevator shaft and into the hallway. Follow it around as it turns several times and then head back the way you came to see that a passage leads off to the left. Climb down the ladder and hit the switch. There's a guard flamethrowing some creatures outside. Hit the switch and head out into the snow. Do a side-jump out with your Desert Eagle drawn to kill him quickly. You will find yourself in a central mine shaft, with several mine carts leading from it (see Secret #1). Hop into the mine cart located on the middle level.

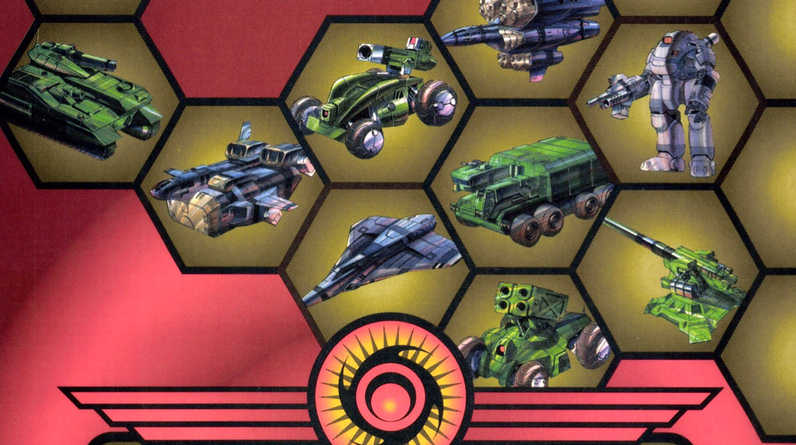




2 You only need to brake once, just after the curve to the right that almost tips you over. You will pick up speed quickly and you need to brake fairly hard before the tracks curve to the left. After that, hit the switch on the right to stop (A). Get out and kill the flamethrower guard and crawl under the drills blocking the path. Slide down the slope backward and grab the edge. Drop down and stay away from that cave, unless you want to fight a rather large creature. Drop down to the next ledge, lower yourself and shimmy to the right. Drop down to the ledge, which should put you in front of a cave. Grab the ledge and shimmy to the left. Drop and grab again, this time to the right, dropping to the ledge below you. Shimmy to the cave in the center of the next ledge and crawl into the cave. You will emerge in a large cavern (see Secret #2). Climb onto the bridge and get the Crowbar. To get out of the room, you will have to climb up onto the lowest snow mound and work your way around to the left (B). This can be tricky, so gauge your jumps carefully. When you reach the opening, climb the ladder and crawl up the ramp. Follow the path past the snow plows (C) until you drop back onto the mine cart tracks. Get back into the mine cart and continue on. After the big climb, hit the brakes hard so you can knock the switch. Duck down to avoid getting hit by beams and brake slightly when the track bends to the right. This will put you back in the main area.



3 Use the Crowbar to break the lock on the door at the middle level to find a Lead Acid Battery. Go to the lower-level cart and hang on. Remain ducked, except to hit the switch, until you come to a stop. Enter the tunnel and hit the switch.



nectaris

MILITARY MADNESS

WHEN
THE BATTLE
REACHES
THE MOON...

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
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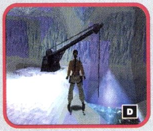
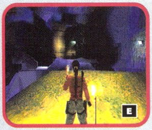
Hit the switch to open the door and follow the passageway. You'll drop into an area with steam coming from the floor. Continue down the path, stopping to investigate the crawlspace for items. Climb the ladder to the top and push the switch at the end of the hallway. Follow the path through the open door until you encounter another creature. Outside the room you will need to dive into the water to retrieve the Winch Starter (D). Return to where you opened the first door, this time going through the side door. Get back into the mine cart, making sure to brake after the first hill. Hit the switch to change tracks and you will end up returning to the main room.

4 Finally get into the top mine cart. Keep your head down until you end up next to yellow submersible. Use the Lead Acid Battery and Winch Starter to lower the submersible. You need to make several stops to make it to the bottom of this long dive alive. First, swim into the opening under the green light. Next you will need to enter the bottom of the sub. Head for the opening at the bottom with the two green lights. Finally, swim all the way up the vertical tunnel to exit the frigid waters for good (E). Cross the bridge and hit the switch to open the door (see Secret #3). Enter the door to exit the level.



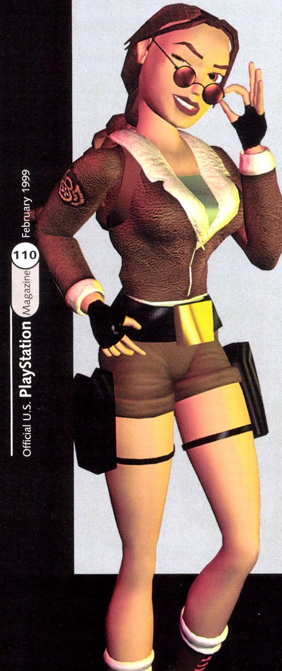


RX-TECH SECRETS

#1 - Before getting in the mine carts, climb onto the building on the top level. Shimmy along the backside of it to reach a ladder and climb down just six steps. A fancy backflip turn around grab. Crawl into the opening to find a Small Medi-pak and Grenades.

#2 - In the cavern, climb up the outcropping to the right of the green opening. Jump forward to grab a well disguised ledge and shimmy to the opening. Push the switch to open a door back at the main area. Jump back to where you found Secret #1 to find a hidden area of track with a Save Crystal, Desert Eagle Clips and MP5 Clips.

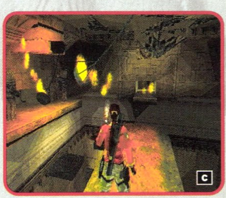
#3 - Cross the bridge and hang down from the left side of it. You can see four ledges which allow you to crisscross the gorge. From the last ledge you can jump across to find a Large Medi-pak and some ammo.



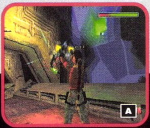
LOST CITY OF TINNOS

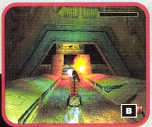
1 When you enter the main courtyard, head to the left corner and climb the ladder. Throw the switch you come to, opening a large door on the ground level, just right of the ladder. Enter the door to receive the Uli Key. Head to the gate with the keyhole next to it and use the Uli Key. Climb the ladder inside and go through the opening into the main area. Throw the switch on the ledge and return inside to slide down the ramp. Open the double doors and head for the room in the back-left corner from this point. Climb the ladder and you're faced with a puzzle. From the left, turn the first, second and fifth switch to open the gate below.

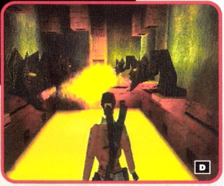
2 Enter the gate and you will find yourself on a huge bridge. A welcoming party of giant mosquitoes awaits you (A). There are a bunch of them to kill before you move on. Walk to the edge of the bridge and take a running jump to the snowy area to the left. Facing the bridge, turn to the left and jump up the slope. Grab the platform above and jump across the gap to the right side of the bridge column (see Secret #1). Drop down the back side and continue on through the cave to the right. On this next bridge you will encounter two huge creatures (B). Hit them quickly and with the heaviest firepower you've got.



3 After the defeat of the creatures, enter the passage to the right. Past the swinging fire pots you'll encounter more mosquitoes. Head to the left and throw the switch to enter the "arena." The three gates will open, each releasing more of the huge, fireball-shooting creatures. Enter the gate on the left, throw the switch and proceed to climb the block just outside of the gate. Follow the ledge to the crawlspace and go through. You need to activate various switches to open the doors in this room (C). Start by dropping to the walkway below you and jump across the platforms to the left until you reach the one with the block on it. Climb the block and the next platform, entering the crawlspace to throw a switch. Now take a running jump to the left and enter the opening there, throwing the switch inside. Jump back to the last ledge and drop down to the block. Look down and you will see a new platform to drop to. Jump to the blocks in the corner coming from the floor and drop down to the ground level. Throw the switch you find there and watch for more mosquitoes. Climb back onto the block and the corner and jump to the platform to the left. Pull







the switch and it will drop you down. Climb back up into the corner and to the two platforms leading to the corner. Climb up to the ledge with the block and back into the crawlspace you threw the first switch in. Hit the switch again and climb down to the platform with the block. Jump to the platform to the right, take one step back and jump forward while holding the grab button. Grab the bottom of the walkway and grapple across to throw the switch. Jump to the platform to the left and drop to the floor (you'll take some damage). Exit the room through the double doors (see Secret #2).

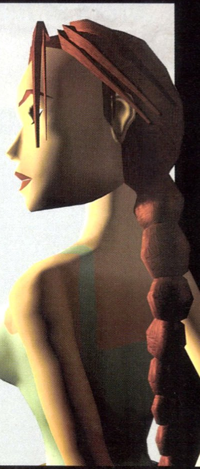
4 Go through the area with all of the pools and go to the back-left corner. Climb the ladder and throw the switch to open the gate. To the right you'll see a shaft of light. Go up the stairs on either side of it and you will find four hallways. These are four separate puzzles involving the four elements–Fire, Earth, Wind and Water. We'll cover them in that order, so look for the elemental symbol above the door and let's go.

5 Death comes easy down the fire path, so save your game. These pillars will ignite if you jump on the wrong one. Take a running jump to the one on the far left and then to the far one against the wall. This next part is tough. Turn to the right and make a running jump to the pillar. Now quickly jump to the tall pillar to the right and across to the doorway. If you aren't fast enough, the pillar will ignite. The next area requires you to jump to platforms, avoiding fire breathing statues (D). Do a running jump to the first platform and hang from it to wait for an opening. Two quick standing jumps will get you to the next step. To the right of this platform is a switch you need to pull. Once pulled jump to the opening and the first Oceanic Mask. Past the swinging pots on the left is the gate leading back to the shaft of light. Use the mask and go to the next puzzle.

5 Trudge through the mud and you'll see a symbol on the right wall. Just after that is a branch to the right. Climb out (see Secret #3) and follow the path to the Oceanic Mask. Once you grab it, the whole place will begin to tremble. There's no hurry, so head back the way you came and watch out for falling rocks. At the fork in the path, take the left side and continue until you reach the mud area. Take a running jump to the rock across from you. Now make an angled standing jump to the rock just off to the right. Another running jump to the next ledge off to the right and you are safe. Climb down the ladder and past the flaming pots to return to the light shaft.

6 The Wind puzzle is a huge maze, so follow the map below to get through it. Once at the ramps you will have to dodge spiked logs. Start on the left and side jump to avoid the log. Crisscross until you reach the top and have the Oceanic Mask. Drop into the water and swim to the exit, returning to place the mask.

7 The final test is the Water puzzle. Run straight off the ledge and you'll land on the platform under the spinning blades. Duck to avoid getting hacked and climb into the water. Swim past the blades into the hole in the bottom. You will see four holes in the water. Swim into the left one for some air and throw the switch. Now you need to swim through the right hole straight up to the air pocket. Swim past the blades into the tunnel with the symbol and pull the lever. Return to the previous room, get some air and enter the now open gate. Climb out, throw the switch and get the Oceanic Mask. Swim back to the other side and through the crevice next to the lever. Get some air and swim through the bottom, letting the current take you. Swim up the tunnel and pull the switch. Place the last mask and go to the pool room. Get the Uli Key from the alcove and use it at the top of the ladder. This will turn out the lights so you can exit the level.



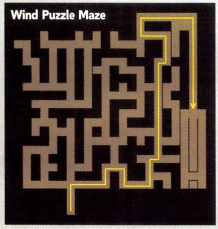
CITY OF TINNOS SECRETS

#1 - Light a flare to see an invisible platform. Take a running jump to it, followed by a standing jump to the bridge. One more invisible platform to go and you are in the nest area of those bugs. Collect the Desert Eagle ammo and Grenades.

#2 - This secret will take speed to reach. Once you pull the last lever you must race out of the room and through the water filled area. Climb the ladder in the back left corner and throw the switch at the top. Go through the room with the shaft of light and climb the stairs. Enter the door on the right and you will end up by the swinging pots. Cross the bridge and slide down to the right and race to the door. A lot of work for a Save Crystal and ammo.

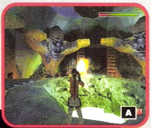
#3 - Climb out of the mud and jump onto the corner rock on your left. Jump to the rock across from you and then make a running jump toward the symbol on the left. Climb into the opening and throw the switch to drop a block. Back by the light, take the small stairway to the right and line the block up with the ladder. You'll find a Save Crystal and Large Medi-pak just past the flaming pots.

Wind Puzzle Maze



METEORITE CAVERN

1 To successfully defeat this monstrosity, you will need to hit him with your heaviest firepower. Two Rockets will temporarily knock him out (A). Quickly run down one of the branches and grab an artifact. You'll need to repeat this for all four of them. Nail him when you're in front of one of the artifact paths making it easy to run and grab it while he is down. One shot from our handsome friend will cook Lara to a crisp, so stay on the move. Once you have finally slain the beast, you will need to work your way up to the opening in the ceiling. Jump to the ladder next to one of the branches and climb up. Head down the passageway to the left and grab the notched ceiling when you are overlooking the main room. Drop to the rocky overhang and jump to the right. Grab the ledge above, jumping to the well hidden ledge across from you. Now make your way past the last guards to the helicopter and the ending cinema.



Bust A Groove

Dance Preview:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with any character and you'll open the Dance View on the Main Menu Screen. You will be able to view dance moves, mess with camera angles, etc. with any of the characters who completed the game. Make sure you save!

Alternate Costumes:
Highlight a character from the Player Select Screen and hold the Select button. With Select held, press X. You'll get that character's alternate costume.

Play as Capoeira:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character. Now you can choose Capoeira.

Play as Robo-Z:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character after you acquire Capoeira.

Play as Burger Dog:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with Hamm after acquiring Robo-Z.

Play as Columbo (the mouse):
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with Shorty after acquiring Robo-Z.

STAGE SELECT
HEAT
FRIDA
STRIKE
HAMM
KELLY
SHORTY
HIRO
PINKY
GAS-O
KITTY-N
CAPOEIRA
OK
CANCEL

READY
ROBO-Z
B-DOG

Looks like Robo-Z is just burnin' up doing the neutron dance.

Tomb Raider III

Incredible Cheats

In the middle of the game without pausing, enter any of these cheats as shown:

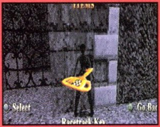
All Weapons: L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2. You will hear a scream.

Fill Energy: R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2. You will hear Lara grunt.

Level Skip: L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2. Lara says "No."

All Secrets (access All Hallows): L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Lara will sigh.

Gives You Race Key at Lara's House: R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Lara says "No."


Select
Go Bac
Racetrack Key

Obtain the Race Key at Lara's home to race on an ATV course.

Select
5000
Go Bac
Rocket Launcher

Blast those baddies with your big ol' Rocket Launcher!

Kagero: Deception II

Begin With Money

If you would like to start the game with extra money, just do this. When the game asks you to Name Her, go to the Name Input Screen and erase the name that's there. Now put in Astarte for your name and then choose OK. When asked, "Is this Name OK?" choose Yes. On the screen where Yocal is talking to King Eclypse, press Start. Look at your total ark and you will see that it is already at 2800!

CHAPTER 1
TRAP
MAP
ENEMY DATA
OPTION
SAVE LOAD
TOTAL ARK 2800
PICK TRAPS FOR MISSION AND DEVELOP NEW TRAPS
SELECT

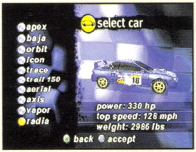
More money means more ways to carry out your evil intentions.

Rally Cross 2

Multiple Codes

For all the codes below, begin a new season and input the codes at the Enter Name Screen. Note: The Tracks, Difficulties & Cars code doesn't unlock all the tracks; you'll also need the individual track codes.

All Tracks, Difficulties & Cars: moobmoob
Hillside Track: bsirhc
Dusty Road Track: mit
Rock Creek Track: kcin
Dry Humps Track: cire
Little Woods Track: foster
Frozen Trail Track: nivek
No Car Collision: incorporeal
Low Gravity: airfilled
High Gravity: leadshot
Restore Gravity: mooney


select car
apex
baja
orbit
icon
trace
trail 150
aerial
axis
vapor
radia
power: 330 hp
top speed: 128 mph
weight: 2986 lbs
back
accept

Try any track you want with a host of hard-to-get cars.

Do you have a trick that you, and only you, know? Don't hold back—write us at:

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

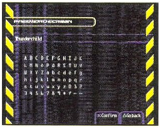
Sorry, we cannot respond to individual letters asking for codes or tricks.

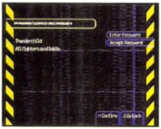
Colony Wars: Vengeance

Password Cheats

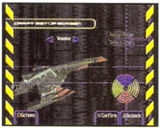
Here are some password cheats for CW:V (all are case-sensitive):

Invincibility: Vampire
All weapons: Tornado
Primary weapons available: Dark Angel
Infinite secondary weapons: Chimera
Infinite afterburners: Avalanche
Infinite money: Hydra
All ships: Thunderchild
FMV and Mission select: Demon
All missions, all ships, infinite secondary weapons, etc.: Blizzard
Disable Cheats: Stormlord





Battle as any one of the ships when you enter "Thunderchild."



Nothing can stop you when at the helm of this bad boy!

Circuit Breakers

400%
GROUP 8
CANYON 2
PRESS SELECT

Circle through all of Circuit Breakers' tracks.

Many Codes

All Tracks in One-Player Mode:
If you want to have all the tracks in One-Player Mode, just start a race then pause the game. While paused, choose OPTIONS/SOUND, then go to FX and press L1+L2.

Better Engine in Two-Player Mode:
When you are about to select a track, press X+Square+Triangle+Circle. A picture of an engine should appear at the bottom of the screen if you are successful.

Jumping Bean Cars in Multiplayer Mode:
When you have chosen your vehicles and selected a circuit to race, you can enable this cheat. As soon as the circuit has loaded and the "3, 2, 1 GO" countdown has started, simultaneously press Circle and Left.

Race at Night:
When you're about to select a track, just push L1+L2+R1+R2 to play at night.

Reverse Tracks in Multiplayer Mode:
On the Circuit Selection Screen, choose the circuit you wish to race on and press Select. As the cars start to drive into the tunnel, quickly press and hold X and Square. While holding them down, press either Left or Right. If the cheat is successfully activated, the cars will spin around and drive into the tunnel backward.

Upside-Down Tracks:
When you're about to select a track, press L2+R2+X+Down. A sweeping arrow should be drawn at the bottom of the information panel.

Twisted Metal III

Sweet Tricks

Infinite Specials:
Enter L1, L1, R1, R1, R1 as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now begin a game and quit. When you begin a game again, you will have an unlimited amount of your character's special weapon.

Play as Minion:
Enter Right, Right, Right, Left, Left as your password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Minion at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

PASSWORD
ENTER PASSWORD

Play as Sweet Tooth:
Enter Left, Left, Left, Right, Right as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Sweet Tooth at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

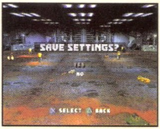
Club Kid's House Level:
Enter Left, Left, Left, Square, Square as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Club Kid's House bonus level.

Warehouse Level:
Enter Square, Square, Square, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle in order to begin at the Warehouse bonus level.

PLAYER 1
SWEET TOOTH
VEHICLE
INFO
PLAYER SETTINGS
CHANGE
BACK
DONE

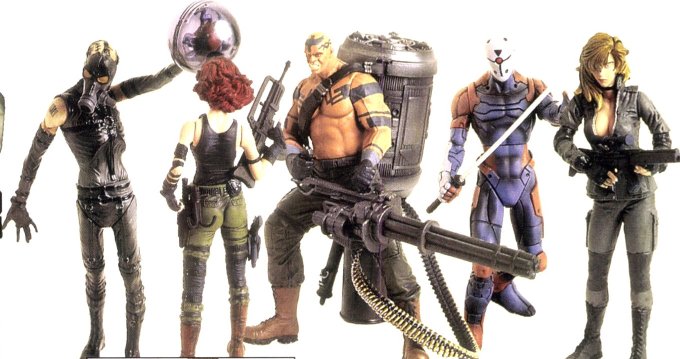
Satisfy your Sweet Tooth craving anytime you want.

Demo Level:
Enter Up, Up, Up, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Demo level shown in the background at the Main Menu.



Save your settings early to save valuable game time.

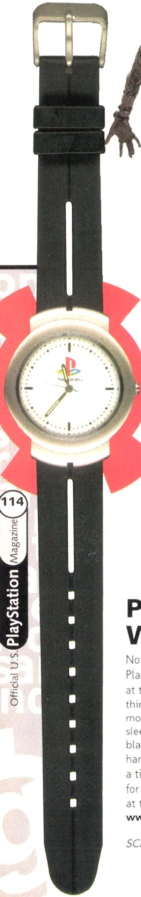
Enable memory card:
Enter Start, Start, Start, Start, Start as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now configure your settings and begin a game. Before the game begins, you will be prompted to save.



Metal Gear Figs

Some people believe McFarlane Toys makes the best action figures out there, and from the look of these new Metal Gear toys, we believe it. Supposedly even Kojima himself requested McFarlane do the figures for his masterpiece, so he could be sure they would be done right. Each of the eight figures, all major characters from Konami's runaway smash game (Liquid Snake and Revolver Ocelot not pictured), look fantastic. They're quite large at almost seven inches tall, but they're amazingly detailed and bear a striking resemblance to their in-game counterparts. Accessories include a gas mask, Stinger missile launcher, night-vision goggles and more for our hero Solid Snake; an urn, a mask and an energy ball for Psycho Mantis; a torture rack for Ocelot; and a removable rifle arm and open helmet head for the Ninja. Watch for them to infiltrate your local game and toy stores starting this February.

McFarlane Toys *$N/A* ●●●●◐



PlayStation Watch

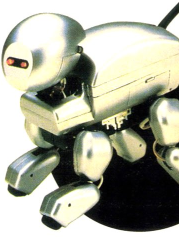
Not spending enough time with your PlayStation? Well, now you can fondly gaze at the PS logo with a flick of the wrist and think warm thoughts about those precious moments with your little gray box. This sleek watch comes with a fashion-forward black rubber band, glow-in-the-dark hands and a natty gray face. There's even a tin gift box, making it an ideal present for Valentine's Day. Order one on the Web at the PlayStation store.
www.playstation.com/launch_store.html

SCEA *$34.95* ●●●●

Entertainment Robot

Forget about the Furby—Sony is working on the next generation of silicon-based companions. Sony describes its forthcoming robot as a suitable substitute for an actual pet, or as a pal "for those who just want someone to be home waiting for their return at the end of the day." Umm...yeah. Still, with a host of interchangeable and expandable features and the ability to sense light, color and motion, this robot might be the next big thing. Check out Sony's Web site for more info.
www.sony.co.jp

Sony *$N/A*



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NFL GameDay 99

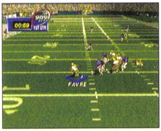
Players	1-8	Developer	989 Sports
Availability	Now	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Sports

✕	Snap/Speed Burst/Pass
○	Fake Hut/Special Moves
□	Audible/Dive
△	Hurdle
L1	Not used
L2	Switch Man
R1	Not used
R2	Not used

OK, so maybe this game has been out for a while now. After all, we did review it way back in our October issue. Still, there's so many football games out there, and you may still be torn as to which one is best for you. So here's a taste of 989 Studios' NFL GameDay 99.

In this demo you can play as either the Packers or the Broncos and go head-to-head for a whole quarter of gridiron action—enough to give you a definite taste of what the full game is all about.

The GameDay series has always looked great, with a sharp 3D engine running the show. The game plays well, too. And while it may take a few liberties with realism, the fast and hard-hitting action makes for a fun game.



NFL GameDay once again raised the bar for football game graphics.

NHL FaceOff 99

Players	1-8	Developer	Killer Game
Availability	Now	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Sports

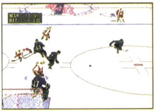
✕	Directional Pass
○	Speed Burst
□	Shoot
△	Drop Pass
L1	Change Strategies
L2	Icon Passing
R1	Change Strategies
R2	Icon Passing

Like all good sports games, the FaceOff series has a new version all set for 1999. If you're a bit apprehensive about hitting the ice, or if you already own a hockey game (or two, or three), this demo will let you strap on the skates to play a bit of 989 Studios' latest effort.

Fans of the series will note that this year's version looks and plays quite a bit better than last year's did. This is because 989 Studios spent plenty of time bumping up the polygon counts and the number of textures.

Once you get into the game, you'll notice that the gameplay is super-smooth, especially with a Dual Shock controller. There's a ton of button combinations to remember, so make sure you thoroughly check out the command screen before you begin to play. You wouldn't want to be caught not knowing what to do, after all.

NHL FaceOff 99 is an immense improvement over last year's game.



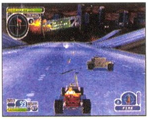
Twisted Metal III

Players	1-4	Developer	989 Studios
Availability	Now	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

✕	Hard Turn
○	Look Back
□	Gas
△	Turbo
L1	Pick-Ups
L2	Fire Active Weapon
R1	Pick-Ups
R2	Fire Machine Guns

When the Twisted Metal franchise was turned over from SingleTrac to Sony's own 989 Studios, everyone wondered if the series would continue to be as much fun as it always had been. Now you get to see for yourself with this demo of Twisted Metal III.

Work off your road rage with a few blasts from your handy flamethrower.



In this demo you play as Firestarter, and you must seek out and destroy your opponent, Club Kid, on and under the ruins of a Hollywood highway. Since this is a Twisted Metal game, there are a ton of weapons scattered over the playing field that you can pick up and add to your arsenal.

In addition to the standard weapons, you also have a special flamethrower mounted on your car. Use this weapon when you're at close range. Also, keep an eye out for the giant blue orbs. Driving into one of these will warp you to a different area of the arena. This can help you get a drop on (or escape from) your opponent.

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

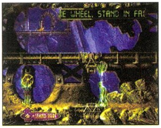
Players	1-2	Developer	Oddworld Inh.
Availability	Now	Publisher	GT Interactive
Analog Controller	No	Genre	Action

✕	Fart
○	Throw
□	Action
△	Jump
L1	Gamespeak
L2	Gamespeak
R1	Run
R2	Sneak

The original Oddworld game (Abe's Oddysee) combined some great platform elements with heavy-duty puzzle solving. Now Abe is back to save more of his fellow Mudokons in Abe's Exoddus.

Gameplay is quite similar to the first Oddworld, only now there are more ways to communicate with your Mudokon brothers. If one of your comrades inhales some laughing gas, he won't listen to your commands. Just give him a good smack to snap him out of it. Or if one of the little buggers gets ticked off at you, a simple apology will win him over.

You'll have to save plenty of workers to complete this demo. Be sure to use the new Quiksave feature so you don't have to start over every time you die.



Abe faces even more Mudokon mayhem in his latest Oddworld outing.

Cool Boarders 3

Players	1-2	Developer	Idol Minds
Availability	Now	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Sports

✕	Forward Movement
○	Not used
□	Hard Turn
△	Rail Slide
L1	Punch Left
L2	Slow Down
R1	Punch Right
R2	Switch to Fakie or Back

With winter waning, if you want to get in some quality snowboarding time, you had better get out to a mountain now. If you live too far away from the slopes (or are too sensible to strap a board to your feet and go tearing down a big hill), you might want to check out our demo of the hit snowboarding game Cool Boarders 3.

While this demo lets you try out one of the courses, it highlights only a fraction of what's available in the full game. There's a whopping total of 32 different courses, and you can even choose from a total of 23 different boards to use. Now that's variety!

As you play, be sure to try pulling off some tricks to earn bonus points. While they may seem tough to perform at first, with practice you'll soon be flipping like a pro.

POINTS
POWER

Fly through the air with the greatest of ease on your gnarly board.

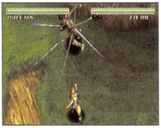
Destrega

Players	1-2	Developer	Koei
Availability	Now	Publisher	Koei
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Fighting

✕	Jump
○	Wide Attack
□	Speedy Attack
△	Powerful Attack
L1	Guard
L2	Not used
R1	Dash
R2	Not used

While Koei is still mainly known for their involved strategy games like Romance of the Three Kingdoms, they did make a surprisingly solid entry into the 3D fighting genre with Dynasty Warriors. Now they're doing it again with Destrega, a 3D fighter with some cool new play techniques. Fighting takes place in huge arenas where you have complete freedom of movement. At close range, fighting is fairly standard. From a distance, however, the game changes dramatically. You can hurl a variety of projectile attacks, each of which can be countered by another type of attack.

The full game features six different play modes, including Endurance and Story modes.



Don't want to get your hands dirty? Just blast your opponent from far off!

Monkey Hero

Players	1	Developer	Blam!
Availability	Now	Publisher	Take 2
Analog Controller	No	Genre	Adventure

✕	Attack/Hover
○	Talk/Pick Up/Throw/Pull
□	Use Item
△	Inventory
L1	Quick-Scroll Inventory
L2	Not used
R1	Quick-Scroll Inventory
R2	Not used

By now, you've probably seen the ads featuring his smiling little mug. So, like many others, you must be wondering, "Just who is this Monkey Hero fellow and what kind of a game is he starring in?" Well, here's your chance to see what this little guy's all about.

If you've played the original Zelda game on the NES, you already have an idea of how Monkey Hero is played. It's an action/adventure game with a handful of RPG elements thrown in. Gameplay takes place in an overhead perspective that worked back in the day, and still works today.

Quit monkeying around and grab that stick already!

As our feisty hero, you must travel across the land, defeating enemies and collecting items to help you on your way. Most of the puzzles in this demo involve finding the right key to open a door or pushing the correct lever. You will, however, need to learn advanced techniques like the hover move to progress.

O.D.T.

Players	1	Developer	Psygnosis
Availability	Now	Publisher	Psygnosis
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

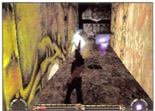
✕	Shoot
○	Jump/Climb/Use
□	Crouch
△	Throw
L1	Spell
L2	Aim Gun
R1	Change Ammo
R2	Sidestep/Walk

O.D.T. stands for Or Die Trying, and if you've been dying to try out this new 3D action game from Psygnosis, here's your chance.

In this demo, you get to play as Ike Hawkins. The full game features a few more playable characters, each with his own attributes. As you run through the levels, use your available weapons to take out the enemy soldiers and gun turrets. There's plenty of ammo and special items to pick up along the way.

You may notice that the game also features a few RPG elements. There are various items to collect as well as spells you can learn. In the full version of the game, you can upgrade your spells as the game progresses.

While our review of O.D.T. a few months back may not have been very flattering, perhaps you'll find the game more to your liking.



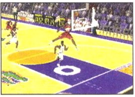
Ooze slurping down the hallway toward you is never all that friendly.

Demo Disc

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a playable demo is worth a million

NCAA Final Four 99

Players	1-8	Developer	989 Sports
Availability	Now	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Sports



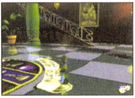
Sony's own 989 Sports strikes again with NCAA Final Four 99, their first contribution to the genre of college basketball games.

This demo lets you watch some of the action and see what's available in the game. The full game features more than 300 NCAA division I-A teams. You don't need a college degree to know that's a lot.

Notice the smooth animation that has gone into making the players look as real as possible. They move up and down the court with as much grace as you would expect from a seven-foot-tall college athlete. In addition to the realistic players, the courts look just like the real thing as well.

Gex 3

Players	1	Developer	Crystal D.
Availability	Q2 '99	Publisher	Eidos
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action



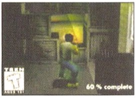
It was kinda hard to miss last month's feature on Gex 3, what with the centerfold of the half-naked *Baywatch* star, Marliece Andrada. Now we bring you some video footage to give you a better peek at the little lizard's biggest game yet.

This demo showcases levels where Gex becomes a burro-riding bandito and the great detective Sherlock Gex. There's even a level where Gex is a pirate. Arrrrr, matey!

The full game will also feature Gex as a Tin Man and as an anime-inspired Mecha Gex. Of course, there's also Andrada's character, Agent Xtra, who's in need of some saving. And don't forget the series' trademark humor.

Jackie Chan Stuntmaster

Players	1	Developer	Radical
Availability	March	Publisher	Midway
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

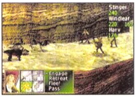


If there's any person perfectly suited for a video game makeover, it's Jackie Chan. Actually, he did get one years ago in Jackie Chan's Action Kung-Fu for the NES and TurboGrafx-16. While that was a simple platform game, Midway is doing Jackie justice by featuring him in a 3D game based around his spectacular stunts.

So far, the action scenes appear to be ripped right out of Jackie Chan's movies. Hopefully, Midway will be able to bring everything together to make the game live up to Jackie's name. We're just wondering if there will be funny outtakes during the game's closing credits.

Shadow Madness

Players	1	Developer	Craveyard
Availability	Now	Publisher	Crave
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	RPG

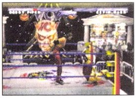


If you're one of the millions of people out there holding their breath for Final Fantasy VIII, perhaps Shadow Madness will give you a quick shot of fresh air. It's an RPG that bears more than a passing resemblance to Square's previous chapter in the Final Fantasy saga.

This demo showcases some of the rendered cinemas as well as the actual gameplay. Like Final Fantasy VII, the game has prerendered backgrounds and polygon characters. The game, though, has a few innovative features, like rendered cinemas that appear during battle scenes to showcase major spells, and the ability to avoid those annoying random battles.

WCW/nWo Thunder

Players	1-2	Developer	Inland Prod.
Availability	Now	Publisher	THQ
Analog Controller	No	Genre	Action



The American public can't seem to get enough of 'em, so THQ is releasing yet another wrestling game. That's OK, though, since most of them have been great fun, and THQ's latest release top to top all of their previous efforts.

As usual, you can pick from a number of real-life wrestlers. A lot of detail went into these guys to make them look as realistic as possible. The arenas are all based on actual WCW events, so you can re-create your favorite pay-per-view matches in the comfort of your own home. There's even a steel cage match. Invite a friend over to join the fun, so you can lay the smack down on him.

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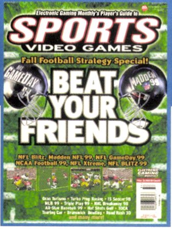
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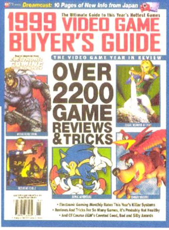
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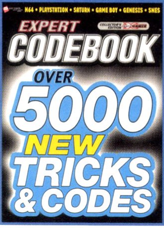
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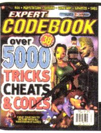
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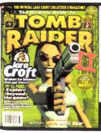
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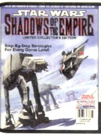
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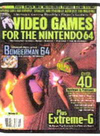
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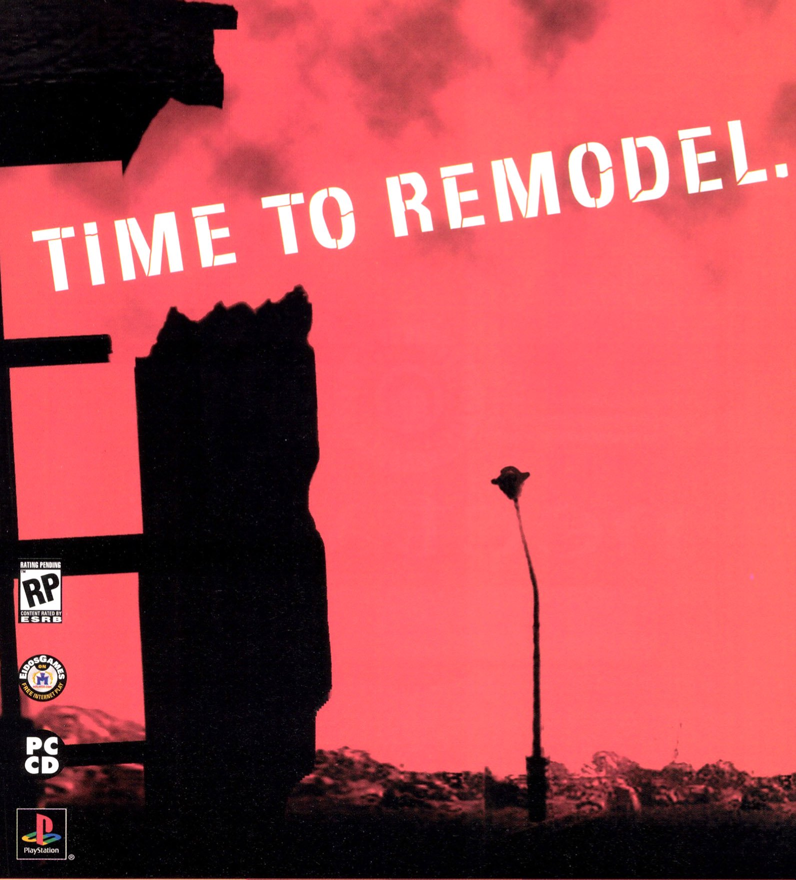
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A look ahead at our next issue

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March 1999

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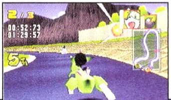

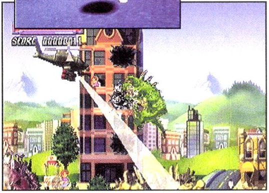

Loads of Reviews and Previews!

With the holidays and 1998 well behind us, it's time to dive head first into the games of 1999. And oh, is it a strong lineup indeed. Heading up the bunch is Midway's arcade conversion of Gauntlet Legends, and we'll have more info on G-Police 2, Need For Speed 4, Bomberman Fantasy Race, Rampage Universal Tour, MLB 2000, NCAA Final Four, 3Xtreme, SportsCar GT and RushDown. And we haven't even mentioned our International section. But that's not all—look for a few surprises on new titles that we can't yet reveal. Don't worry, have we ever let you down? Alright, maybe it's best if you don't answer that question.

Nevertheless, we're going to put gobs of new PlayStation games through the stringent *OPM* tests such as the wonderfully named Monkey Hero and the Metal Gear-esque Syphon Filter, as well as Akuji the Heartless, March Madness 99, Clock Tower 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3 and the game we know you've been waiting for: Irritating Stick. You might be interested in that one not only for the review but also for the jokes regarding the title we make at the game's expense.

See? We warned you that he was unstoppable. And now he's on our demo disc. We keep talking about him, and now it's time for you to play with him. Ladies and gentlemen: Mr. Domino!

Electronic Gaming Monthly

Christmas is just a distant, happy memory. Visions of sugar plums have turned to horrific scenes of depravity. Silent Hill has arrived! Take a peek at this promising new title from Konami. Also in the spotlight is the other half of Konami's one-two punch—Castlevania 64. Find out if 3D graphics have been kind to this classic.

Time to put a new crop of peripherals through the paces. Some of the new designs for '99 will surprise you. We'll even show you one that doubles as a bondage mask...don't ask. We'll have more info on 989 Studios' potential sleeper hit Syphon Filter. Also, the Review Crew reveals their plan to open a specialty sandwich shop.

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This Metal Gear Solid/Resident Evil hybrid could very well be the creepiest game of all time. EGM takes you on a surreal trip into the heart of Konami's Silent Hill.

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playables

Syphon Filter • Bust A Groove • Shadow Madness • Fisherman's Bait • Akuji the Heartless • No One Can Stop Mr. Domino • Street Sk8er

non-playables

NCAA FinalFour '99 • Guardian Legends

Expert Gamer

XG's March issue will contain guides on South Park, Castlevania 64, Syphon Filter and more!

You'll have the luck of an *Expert Gamer* with our March issue. First, we deliver the much-promised strategy guide on South Park. It'll provide tips on how to beat each hella cool level. Next, battle biological terrorists and complete complicated missions with the helpful hand of the Syphon Filter's guide. As well, *XG's* next issue will contain two mega guides on Castlevania 64 and Silent Hill. Both of these intense games will feature highly detailed maps, Boss and enemy tactics, plus a lot more!

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1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-sized postcard containing your name, address and phone number together with your list of 10 most wanted video games to "Top Ten Most Wanted" Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail it to dan_pelusoezd.com or fax it to (630) 916-7227. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household per month. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff-Davis and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization or household per month. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive two (2) video games as determined by Namco. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $80. Winners shall be determined by a random drawing of all valid entries by OPM editors, whose decisions are final. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither ZD Inc., Namco nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to OPM Top 10 Most Wanted Winners List, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

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Official Contest Rules:
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OPM LETTER OF THE MONTH
Official Contest Rules
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with your comments to "OPM Letter of the Month", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of *OPM*. All entries become exclusive property of ZD Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive a box containing various items from the *OPM* offices. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $10. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by *OPM* editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of ZD should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither ZD Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Letter of the Month Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list.
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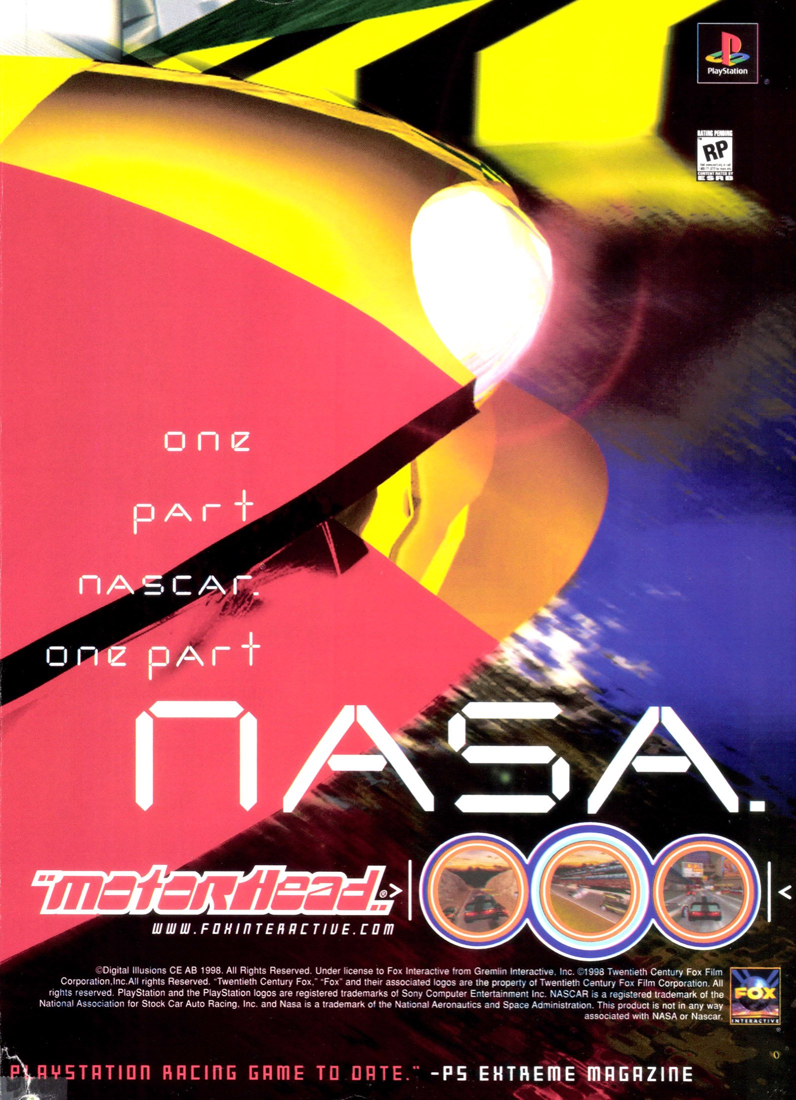
"MOTORHEAD IS THE BEST LOOKIN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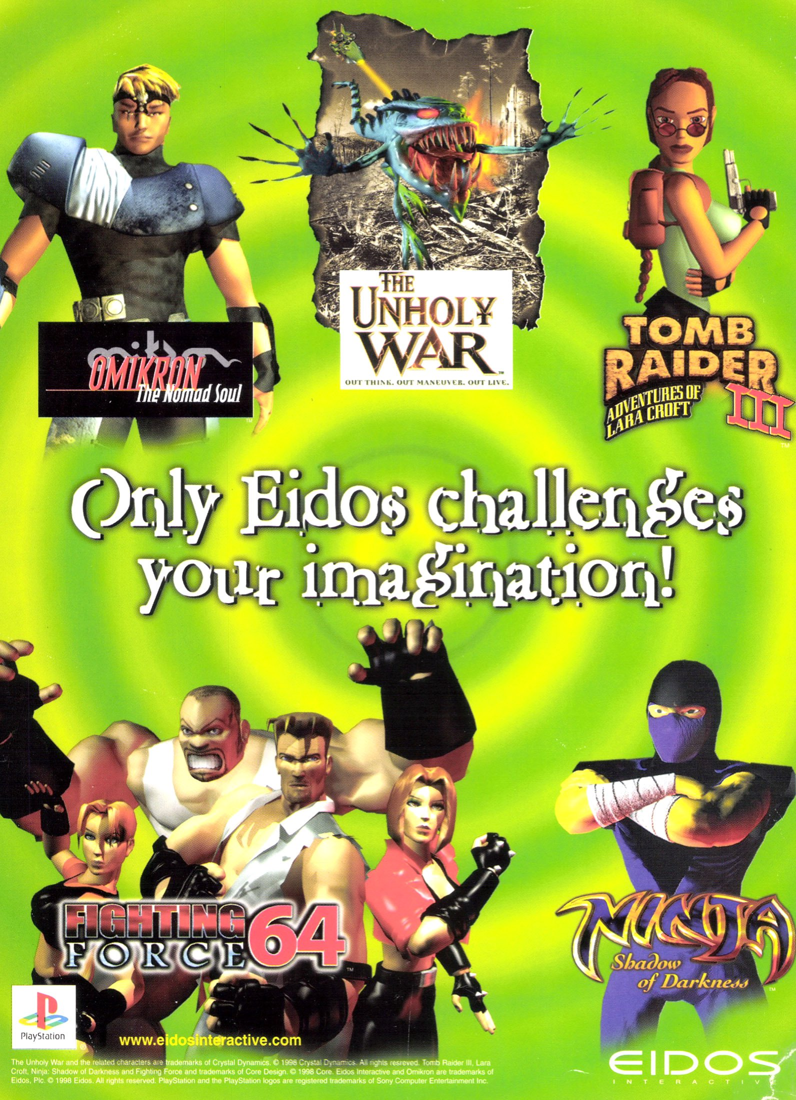
PLAYSTATION RACING GAME TO DATE." -PS EXTREME MAGAZINE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In the year 2085 the Collapse came hard and fast. Only a select few had the strength and intelligence to rebuild the world from the embers of a nuclear holocaust. You were one of them.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIT DESIGN

Warzone 2100 showcases a depth of play never seen before in a strategy game. 400 different types of technologies allow you to design and build more than 2000 battle units. That's right. Unit designs aren't predetermined for you. Use your own wits to create an unbeatable battle arsenal.

SUPERIOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The AI engine is so sophisticated that it allows you to recycle the experience of your field units into bigger, better and even more fierce war machines. Over time, combat units become more accurate, command units command larger groups of troops and repair units repair faster and more efficiently.

FULL 3D BATTLEFIELDS

Warzone 2100 slams the door on other top-down 2D strategy games. It showcases a lightning fast, fully functional 3D game engine with a rotatable and zoomable camera for fast and furious gaming action. Not just eye candy, you'll experience true line-of-sight and fog-of-war effects. Strategically placed radar units warn you of hidden enemy units and allow you to lob mortar shells over mountain obstructions.

IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR FATE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. THEN USE THEM TO BUILD A NEW WORLD.

WARZONE 2100

STRATEGY BY DESIGN

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STAGE 007
STEP 3
STAGE 037
STEP 7
Attack level 0
Fuel 1380/1500
CREDIT 0
KING
GUNSAT 3
LV.6
CARD
LIFE
CREDIT 0
PAUL

Man In Black
"Your hot blooded desi
for battle has not bee
tamed, I see."

Knight
This is your last chance....
Where is he?

The BEST GAMES of 1998

PlayStation

Balbanes
Don't cry...my daughter...
Green Country Club

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R4

We hash out everything you need to know about the best Ridge Racer yet. PocketStation and JogCon info, an exclusive developer interview, and more!

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Games of the Year

Don't let Solid Snake's appearance in a Tux frighten you off. Come as you are to *OPM*'s glamourous Games of the Year event.

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Silent Hill

Ah, finally an update on Konami's new adventure thriller. Take a look and decide whether you think it has what it takes to dethrone Resident Evil.

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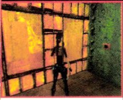
Tomb III Strategy



Use the second part of our Tomb Raider III walkthrough to wrap up the game in style. You did use the first part from last month's issue, right?

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You've been dying to know who won our "Fill In The Caption" contest, haven't you? We announce the winner and continue to let readers mull over the whole twisted Thrill Kill debate.

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News

The possibility of PocketStation being delayed, Spider-Man crawling onto the PlayStation, and musings of WipeOut 3 in 1999 make the headlines this month.

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Previews

Take a look at Syphon Filter, Clock Tower 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3, NBA ShootOut '99, Shadow Madness, Street Sk8er and Rampage Universal Tour, among others.

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International

All the hottest games fresh from Japan. This month the amazing R-Type Delta, Dance! Dance! Dance! and Hard Edge, not to mention new Square titles and pics of Ace Combat 3!

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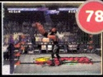

Find out if R Types, Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley 2, Bust-A-Move 4, Jeopardy! and WCW/nWo Thunder (presidential candidate "Hollywood" Hulk Hogan included) are worth your time.

78

Tricks

Don't like what you're wearing to the dance? Get alternate costumes for your BAG characters with our handy code. We also have a save-game early trick for TM3 and more.

112

g.e.a.r.

They're certainly not anything you want to give your sweetheart for Valentine's Day, but the Metal Gear Solid figures sure are cool. We also have the PlayStation Watch and more.

114

Demo Disc

NFL GameDay 99, Twisted Metal III, Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus, Cool Boarders 3 and NHL FaceOff 99 are all yours to play this month. You also get an early look at Gex 3 and WCW/nWo.

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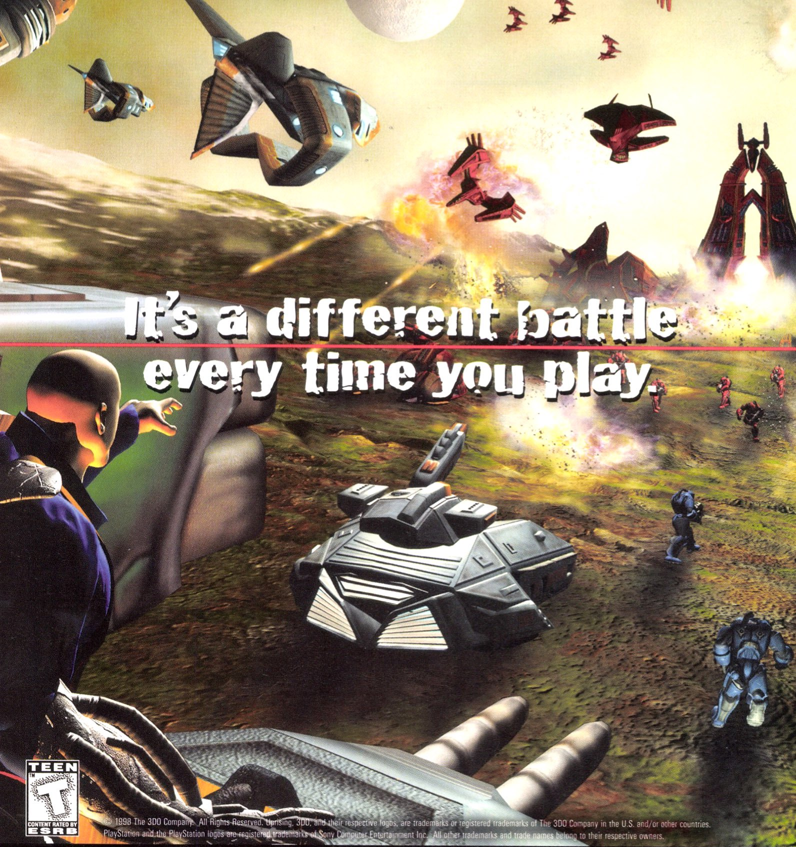
It's a different battle
every time you play.
TEEN
T
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"Packs serious action - plentiful gameplay with great graphics and sound." - PSM Online

"...one of the most advanced games on the PlayStation." - Gamer's Republic

"...unlike anything PlayStation gamers have yet seen." - Gamecenter.com

The smell of burning corpses,
however, never changes.

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"Plays fast and chaotic. Literally dozens of units can be on the screen at one time, and the battles that take place are epic."
- PSM

- Virtually unlimited replayability. Unbelievable destruction.
- Command massive brigades of sci-fi troops, tanks, gunships and bombers.
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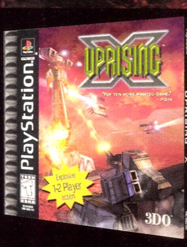
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"TOP TEN MOST WANTED GAME" - PSM
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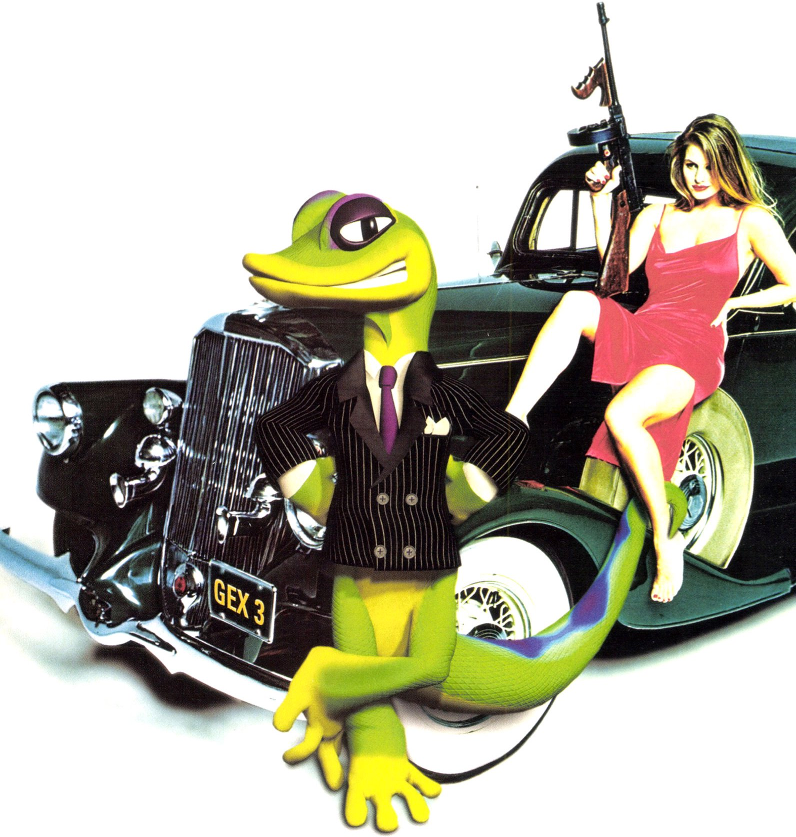
Get reacquainted with an all-new GEX.
And his Miss Adventures.



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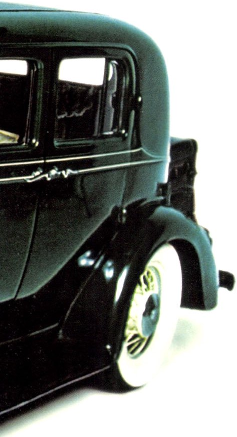
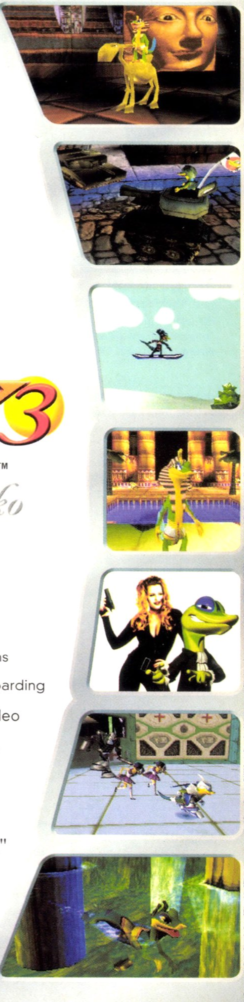


GEX 3™

Deep Cover Gecko

- All-new intuitive camera system guides you through hazardous 3D missions
- Over 25 all-new disguises with new abilities like scuba diving and snowboarding
- Baywatch's Marliece Andrada stars as Agent Xtra in all-new full-motion video
- An all-new GEX spits fireballs, controls tanks, crocodiles, burros and more
- Over 1,000 all-new celebrity impressions and wisecracks

"...the most in-depth platforming game on the PlayStation."
-Official PlayStation Magazine



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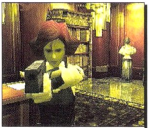
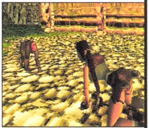
Caption Contest Winner



"Let's just say Meryl wasn't very happy about the peeping Tom thing..." Congratulations to Felix Rivera of Hartford, CT!

Now you too can have your shot at history with the OPM Caption Contest! Every month, we run a game-related picture or screen shot. Your job is to write a humorous caption for it and submit it to us at any of the addresses on the following Letters page. The winner will be chosen by the following scientific method: We'll read them all, and the one that makes us laugh our asses off will get a sparkling new game. Now, see what you can do with this pic:



[You didn't really think those were the official rules, did you? For all the legal stuff on this and our other contests, please refer to page 121.]

Thrill Kill, Still

Dear *OPM*,

At first glance, Thrill Kill seemed like a cool game. After playing a beta version of the game (as to how, I plead the Fifth), it still looked like a cool game. But after reading the Editorial and Letters sections of the December issue of *OPM*, I got to thinking. The game itself would have been gimmicky if it was ever released. Most gamers would get bored of it after a while because they'd get desensitized to the blood and sex and then be left with a game that is, to me, subpar.

Granted, the four-player engine is a great idea, and the PlayStation is in dire need of four-player games that aren't sports games, which is why I pray nightly that Quake II will support four players.

Believe me, Thrill Kill could never live up to its hype if it were released anywhere close to what the beta version was. And we already went through playing games because they're violent (e.g., Mortal Kombat). While I mourn the loss of Thrill Kill, it's probably better it never came out. And I hope Westwood can come up with another game using the Thrill Kill engine, because I'd definitely check it out.

staryx@juno.com

Dear *OPM*,

I enjoyed the last issue [Vol. 2, Iss. 4], except for the Letters section. I see if you suck up to the editor, it becomes Letter of the Month. [Check out this month's winner. So there. —*Ed.*] I played Thrill Kill at E3 and it was GREAT. We do not need EA to censor games for us. If they do not want to be held responsible, they should sell the game to someone else. Parents can censor the games for the kids. The rating system is there to help them. If you're offended, do not buy it. This was a new game, a four-player fighter. How many of these exist?

Lynne Masters-Lee

leezoo@juno.com

Letter of the Month

Dear OPM,

I was kind of shocked to see Kraig Kujawa's reaction to the cancellation of Thrill Kill. I think it's a terrible waste. EA's reasoning behind cancelling it was weak: It might hurt their image? It was too disturbing to be released? Now, didn't EA release Road Rash and Need for Speed? These games might not have been as graphic, but still encouraged dangerous and more realistic behavior. In fact in Need for Speed III you are supposed to run from the police. I think that is more common of a crime than, say, little Billy strapping a bear trap to his face and chasing down stilt-wearing midgets. If EA doesn't want to release it, then they should simply sell the game. That way everyone is happy: People can buy it and EA doesn't get any bad press that they are so concerned about. Yes, it is true that it's their decision, but we still have the right to voice our disapproval of it. After all, we are the ones who buy the games. Remember, your voice is important if you let it be heard.

"JK 6655231"

via the Internet

Do you think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your timely, original, well-written video game expositions (you don't even have to agree with us!) and you too could win an official OPM Box of Joy. New surprise goodies every month!

Dear *OPM*,

I just wanted to tell you how glad I was that SOMEONE in this industry had the maturity to give everyone a different opinion about Thrill Kill! I happen to share this opinion, but I wouldn't be risking much to tell it to everyone. I'm so tired of CRAPPY games getting a heap of sales just because of their ultra-violence (like Carmageddon and Grand Theft Auto)!

Travis Babb

tbnva@erols.com

Dear *OPM*,

A few months ago I read some previews about Thrill Kill. Everything written about this game promised it would be a ruthless and morbidly violent experience with a sprinkle of S&M. So it is quite obvious why I, among many others, am very upset that the game will not be hitting store shelves here in the U.S. I know that the ratings were only put on games to keep a few uptight folks quiet, but they do let the parents know what a game that their child may want contains. So what's the problem here? Thanks to many great PlayStation games in the past, we've already been exposed to blood, guts, breasts, explosions, death in mass quantities, sexism, theft, drugs, decapitations, flesh melting, destruction of innocent animals, blood drinking, school buses blowing up, satanic rituals and other examples of the human appetite. This is what people expect.

Joseph VanBuren

dostah333@yahoo.com

Joseph, we enjoyed hearty laughter at your subtle satire until it occurred to us that you might be serious. Whereas most defenders of video games refute the claim that games desensitize people to violence, you seem to embrace the unusual idea that this not only happens, but that it's a *good* thing. Sort of counter-productive, don't you think?

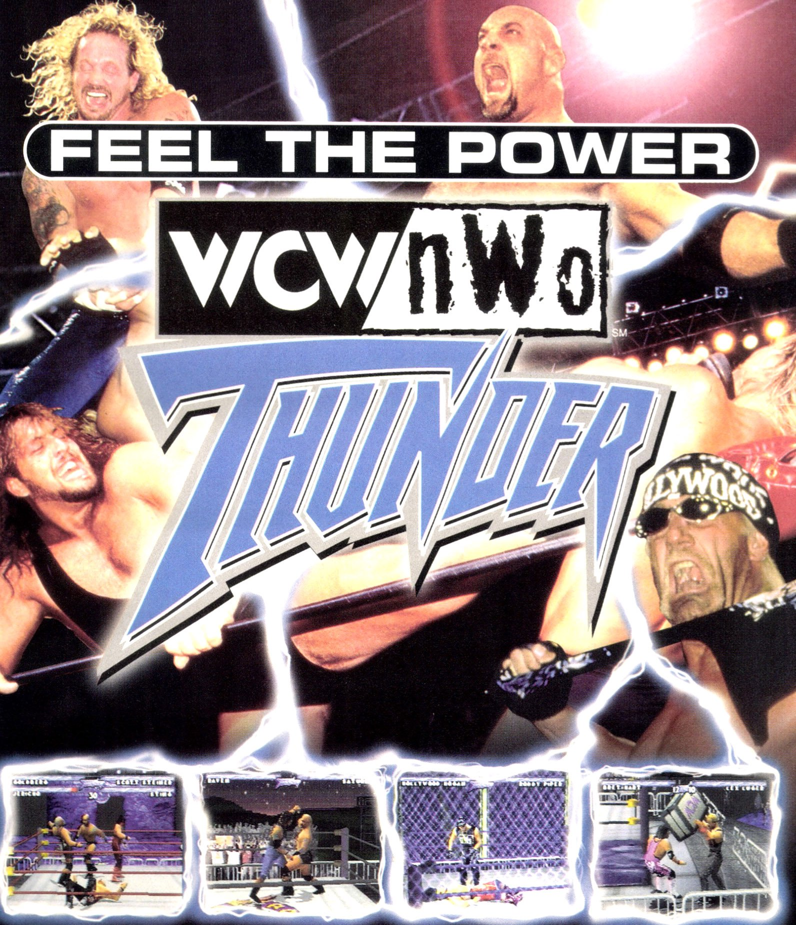
we want your input!

How do you like the mag? What about the design? Are we leaving anything out?

Let us know!

To get special attention as far as design and content issues go, label your letters or e-mails with the heading: PlayStation Magazine suggestions c/o the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine at the addresses on the final Letters page.

We can't wait to hear from you.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BRET HART
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PlayStation®

Letters

A glimpse into the demented minds of our readers

Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services. For more information see this month's Demo Disc section.

Battle of the Sexes

Dear *OPM,*

I'm writing to say I did not like the article, "10 Games Your Girlfriend Will Play" [Vol. 2., Iss. 4]. I play my PlayStation more than my boyfriend does. I think this article is very sexist. I especially dislike the 10 games that you say your girl will never play. Take number eight: Basically Any Sports Game. I sit in front of my TV playing NASCAR 99 for one or two hours at a time. I also play games like Tenchu (I play mostly as Rikimaru), Twisted Metal III, Resident Evil 1 and 2, Castlevania: Symphony of the Night and Die Hard Trilogy. I don't sit there and play my brother's five-year-old game Spyro the Dragon and say, "Oh, how cute." I'm sorry, I think that is sexist.

Kristie Strickland
Springfield, MO

Many of you who have written in appear not to have noticed the fact that the feature was actually written by GrrlGamer Nikki Douglas of www.grrlgamer.com. We reasoned that a woman knows more about what women like to play than those of us of the smellier sex. In that vein, we passed your complaints on to Nikki, who offered this response:

"As grrls ourselves, we know that there are all kinds of grrls who like to play all kinds of games. This is a guide for the erstwhile GUY gamer out there, trying to introduce his partner to the wonderful world of video games.

"Obviously a grrl already into games knows what she likes and wants to play. If it brings just one grrl over to the gaming side, then we feel we have accomplished our mission, whether she plays Spyro or Duke Nukem."

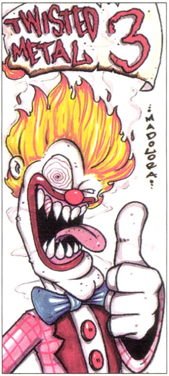
We're Only Human!

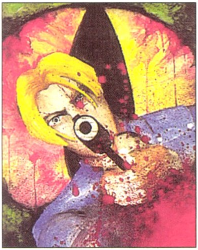
Umm...whoops. In an effort to prove that nothing's ever perfect, we misnamed our preview of Marvel Super Heroes Vs. Street Fighter in the January issue, instead calling it Marvel Vs. Capcom. Marvel Vs. Capcom has only recently arrived in arcades, and will most likely never be on the PlayStation. We plead temporary insanity. Also, in the Top 20 section, we erroneously attributed Twisted Metal 2 to 989 Studios, when it was published by SCEA. Thanks to our readers for pointing out these misprints.

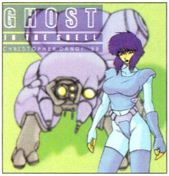
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO *OPM*? POINT YOUR BROWSER TO http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service AND FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE FORM. WITH A CREDIT CARD, YOU CAN EVEN START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION!

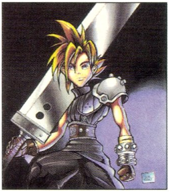
Reader Art for the Masses

Every month we'll be picking one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The creator of the winning work will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game (a *good* new game) in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. Runners-up (as many as we want, 'cause it's our magazine) are printed as well. Good luck!









Check out this month's artists! Left: Andy Madolora, madolora@hcc.hawaii.edu; top right: Christopher Dang, pandaman83@hotmail.com; bottom right: John Nanez, dejunai@earthlink.com; and above, this month's winner: Daniel Hogan, Vancouver, BC. Congratulations, Daniel! Your new game is on its way!

3 ways to reach us

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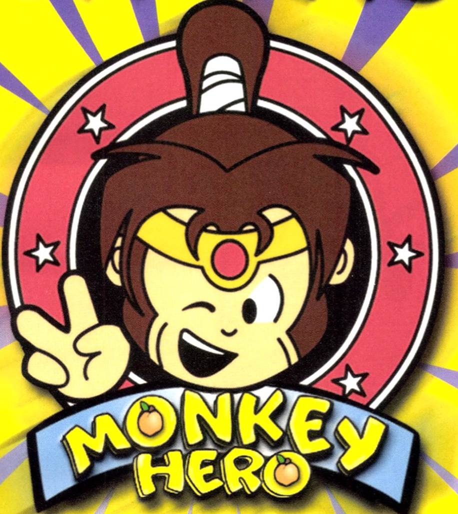
HALF ROCK HALF MONKEY ALL HERO!!



With an eye for excitement and a nose for nonsense, Monkey Hero is one funky monkey. Join Monkey as he explores massive dungeons and battles legions of baddies in a crusade to restore peace among the Three Worlds. It's a good thing he's one tough monkey.

TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE

EVERYONE
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PlayStation

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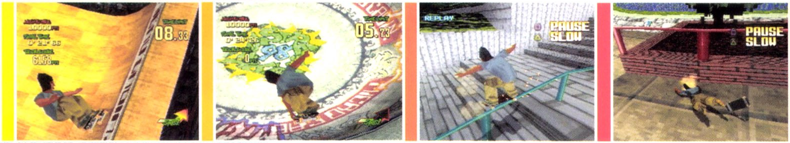
Real Tricks. Real Boards. Real Pain.*



*Actual gameplay only simulates injury but trust us—it's painful just to watch.

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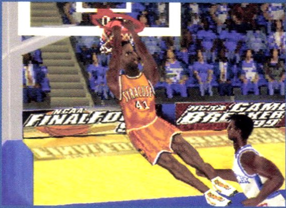
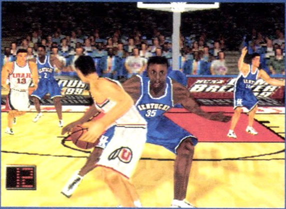
FANS GO TO GAMES.
FANATICS HELP WIN THEM.


SYRACUSE
41
NCAA FINAL FOUR
NCAA GAME BREAKER 99

All the crowd-erupting college dunks, from windmills to alley-oops, for when it's time to send a message. Of course, feel free to do it just for show.


UTAH
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KENTUCKY
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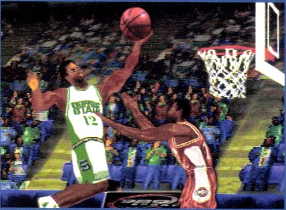
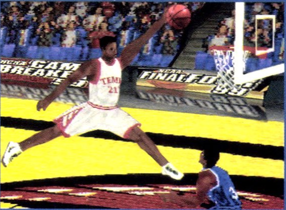
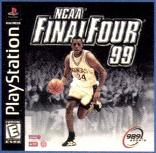
More than 250 NCAA® Division I teams, real uniforms and real floors. Also real adrenaline, real pressure and real depression after a missed three-pointer for the win.



With Quinn Buckner's play-by-play, he'll be sure to point out a sweet finger roll or pull-up J, but get sloppy and he'll make you feel like a red-shirt freshman.


NCAA GAME BREAKER
NCAA FINAL FOUR 99
TEMPLE
21

Nothing brings the student body to their feet faster than a soaring dunk over a 6'9" power forward.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Hesitation Over Sony's PocketStation in Japan

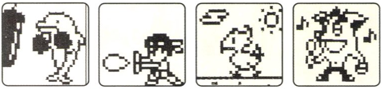
Fearing a shortage of supply, Sony recently announced it would delay the PocketStation's launch in Japan. The news came just a week and a half before its expected release date of Dec. 23. The PocketStation is now slated to debut Jan. 23.

But Sony may now have to contend with lack of demand for the diminutive peripheral due to diminished momentum surrounding the games that support it. At PocketStation's release date, compatible games, including Crash 3, will already have been on store shelves for an entire month.

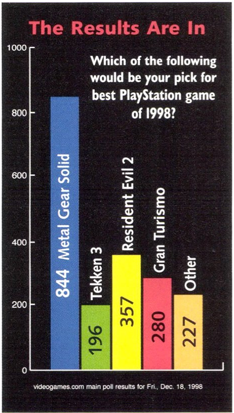
An official announcement from Sony regarding the U.S. release of the PocketStation is still a ways off, but it's generally expected sometime in mid-'99. At its U.S. release a host of games, from RPGs to sports titles, are expected to support it. However, it's still unclear whether the U.S. releases of the initial games that support the PocketStation in Japan (like Street Fighter Alpha 3) will support the peripheral when they're released here. SFA3 is expected to be released prior to the PocketStation in the United States.

In case you're unfamiliar with the PocketStation, it's a memory card-sized handheld LCD game machine. You load applications onto it from PlayStation game CDs and can play minigames similar in style to an LCD virtual-pet game. Also, data can be transferred between two systems via an infrared link.

PocketStation-compatible games currently include R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, Crash Bandicoot 3 (Japanese version), Theme Aquarium, Street Fighter Zero 3 and Final Fantasy VIII.



Will the delay of PocketStation's Japan launch hurt its sales?



New System to Foil the Forgers

One of the first games to implement the new software check is SCEI's new RPG Poporogue, released last December in Japan.

Sony just struck another blow to software piracy.

Sony recently released the 7501C, a new configuration of PlayStation hardware with a very subtle difference—it features a new panel attached to the board in such a way that it prevents it from being opened to make modifications to play pirated games.

Video game piracy costs the industry more than $3 billion a year in lost revenue, according to IDSA. Making it nearly impossible to install a mod chip, which would allow copies to be played, will hopefully serve as a deterrent to would-be pirates.

A side effect of this move is that new PlayStations will be harder to modify with the intention of playing import games, such as the ones we cover in *OPM*. Also, Sony has begun putting a software check in certain titles, which will make them unplayable on PlayStations with a mod chip or from a region they aren't supposed to be played in. Recent games like Poporogue and IQ Final have these software checks, and therefore can't be played on any modified systems. Bad news to fans of import games, but it will be good news if it encourages Sony to bring more games people want from Japan to the States.

Sony has revised its PlayStation hardware several times since the system's release in 1995. Most of those revisions are completely transparent—you wouldn't notice a difference unless you opened up the machine and compared the two directly.

Fightin' for Fighter Maker

Ascii is asking fans to let them know if they should bring Fighter Maker to the United States.

Ascii first announced it would bring Fighter Maker stateside at E3 last year, but those plans were canceled a mere month later. Now there's a possibility Fighter Maker may still come to our shores.

It seems a U.S. version of Fighter Maker was canceled because the team that developed it had already moved on to other titles, and it wasn't feasible for them to go back and work on the translation. But Ascii recently told *OPM* that you if want to see Fighter Maker in the U.S., you've gotta speak up and convince them that you'd be eager to purchase a copy if it were made available here. No guarantees, of course, but at least there's some hope. Send your e-mails to **gamemaster@asciient.com.**

News Bits

Diesel-Powered G-Police

THE FACTS: Psygnosis signed an agreement with Diesel to feature its clothes in G-Police 2 and for Diesel to make and market G-Police-inspired clothing.

THE RUB: Psygnosis has teamed up with several clothes manufacturers before, and we sincerely hope the quality of both the clothes and the game are up to par this time around.

Snowboardin' Aplenty

THE FACTS: There'll be plenty of snowboarding action on the PlayStation this winter. Capcom is introducing Tricky Sliders and Atlus has Snowboard Kids on deck, both for release before winter's end.

THE RUB: With an avalanche of snowboarding titles from 989 Studios and EA Sports in addition to these, we can't help but think that only the best will survive the cold. The others will suffer from retail hypothermia.

Bustin' an Arcade Groove

THE FACTS: Enix's dance-and-rhythm action game, Bust A Groove (Bust A Move in Japan), is coming to the arcades with a few new dancers and songs.

THE RUB: Why bother releasing an arcade version of a game that's almost a year old? Just release a sequel already. That's what everyone wants anyway.

Chrono Trigger Aimed for PS?

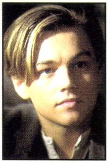
THE FACTS: Rumor has it that Square is preparing a sequel to Chrono Trigger for release on the PlayStation or PlayStation 2.

THE RUB: Will a time-traveling RPG be more fun to play now or on a future PlayStation system? Either way, die-hard Square fans have been waiting for this game for a looong time.

What Leo Really Likes

THE FACTS: Actor Leonardo DiCaprio reportedly rented a secret hideaway and stocked it with a dozen TVs—and attached a PlayStation to each one.

THE RUB: Seems like legendary stud-boy DiCaprio might prefer the PlayStation to playing the field. What's next—Titanic: The Video Game?



Titanic Sales Numbers

THE FACTS: By the way, sales of the PlayStation console in 1997 outgrossed *Titanic*, the biggest box office success of all time.

THE RUB: We wonder if Leo's collection of a dozen or so PlayStations helped Sony's sales numbers outstrip those of Leo's hit movie.

Webslinger Swings to Sony

THE FACTS: Activision is doing the honors on the latest video game version of Spider-Man, America's favorite webslinger. It will be a 3D action/adventure game, set for release sometime in '99.

THE RUB: Spidey's triumphant return to consoles is good news, but he hasn't been in a good game since the original 2600 title. Turning a comic book into a video game is no easy task, and many have failed. It's in Activision's hands to bring him back in style—c'mon, we know you can do it!

Top 10

Japan's Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

September sales rankings courtesy of *The PlayStation Magazine Weekly*, SOFTBANK:

1. **Legend of Legaia** SCEI - RPG
2. **Beat Mania** Konami - Misc.
3. **Super Robot Wars** Banpresto - Strategy
4. **Simple 1500 Series Mahjong** Culture Publishers - Puzzle
5. **Metal Gear Solid** Konami - Adventure
6. **Sampaguita** SCEI - Adventure
7. **SD Gundam G-Generation** Bandai - Sim.
8. **Spectral Force 2** Idea Factory - Simulation
9. **Itadaki Street Gorgeous King** Enix - Puzzle
10. **Kamen Rider** Bandai - Fighting

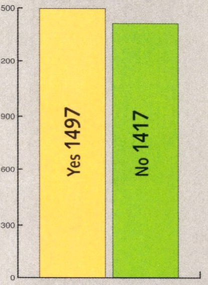
U.K.'s Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

September sales rankings courtesy of Chart Track, ©ELSPA 1998:

1. **Spyro the Dragon** Sony - Action
2. **Formula 1 '98** Psygnosis - Racing
3. **TOCA Touring Car Championships** (Platinum) Codemasters - Racing
4. **Tekken 3** Namco/Sony - Fighting
5. **Resident Evil** (Platinum) Virgin - Adventure
6. **Crash Bandicoot** (Platinum) Sony - Action
7. **Grand Theft Auto** (Platinum) Take 2 - Action
8. **Tenchu** Activison - Action
9. **V Rally** (Platinum) Infogrames U.K. - Racing
10. **Colin McRae Rally** Codemasters - Racing

(Note: Platinum is the U.K. equivalent of Greatest Hits domestically.)

Back to the Polls



Are you less interested in NBA basketball video games because of the lockout?

videogames.com main poll results for Thurs., Dec. 17, 1998

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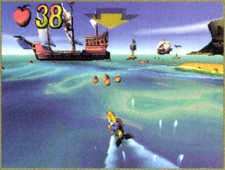

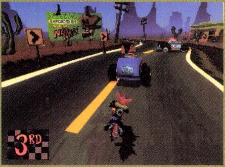

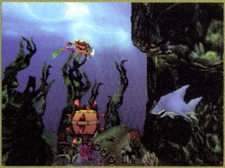

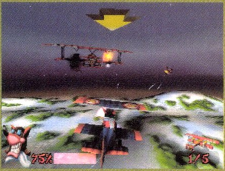

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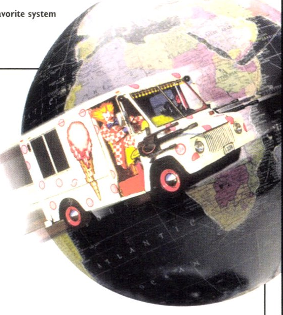
Tales From the Twisted Metal III Ice Cream Truck Tour



In this age of mainstream gaming, high-profile media tours have become one of the preferred ways to garner national and local publicity. While a tour may sound great on paper, it is often the cause of unplanned mischief. A recent example is 989 Studios' taking Sweet Tooth and his heavily armed ice cream truck on a trek across the country. Here's a glance at the planning behind the tour and some of the things that happened during it, as told by Shon Damron, Marci Ditter and crew.

989 Studios Plans the Tour:

It wasn't easy finding an ice cream truck. F.Y.I.—there is no section in phone book for "Ice Cream Trucks." You hear ads all the time for the "Everything Pages." Yeah, everything except ice cream trucks. We called approximately 150 truck sales dealerships, 20 catering companies, every major brand of ice cream company and six film studios trying to locate an ice cream truck.

Once we secured the truck, we set about finding bright-pink shag carpet. After a few hours of phone calls it became clear Georgia is the place to find it—go figure!

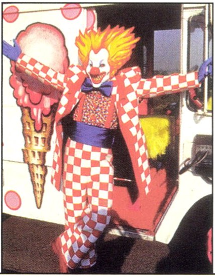
Next, we had to find a stand-in for Sweet Tooth. No problem, right? We needed an "actor" in Chicago and New York to play the part. We were so desperate to find a man exactly 5'11" with a 34" waist and a size-11 shoe to fit into Sweet Tooth's costume that we even called escort services. However, we were told the job was below the standards of employees at California Hardbodies and professional clown organizations. Our solution: a Sony Music security guard and a Tower Records employee who did the job for free.

Things We Learned During The Tour:

- Learn to love lots of honking and obscene gestures directed at you in your ice cream truck.
- Bribery will get you everywhere. Need to park an enormous pink polka-dotted ice cream truck with machine guns in front of someone's business establishment for a few hours? No problem, as long as you have plenty of Twisted Metal III and 989 Studios gear to give away.
- Never underestimate the lengths Twisted Metal III fans will go to when it comes to getting an advance copy of the game. At the Twisted Metal III Chicago radio remote and ice cream eating contest, one fan stuffed a bowl of ice cream down his pants in 30-degree weather in hopes that the judges would notice him and give him a copy of the game. We'll skip the easy jokes here.
- How to give a product demo while pretending not to notice pink shag fuzzies (from the wall-to-wall carpeting inside the truck) on the public relations manager's face.
- How to maneuver a 37-inch TV across Wilshire Blvd. and into an ice cream truck with guns—during rush hour.
- How to pick up chicks using a Sweet Tooth mask and a pink polka-dot ice cream truck with guns.
- How to waive an L.A. parking citation. Just tell the police you're filming a movie. It works!

Twisted Tour Moments:

- Hearing a NYPD officer yell at the N.Y. clown posing as Sweet Tooth to "grow up and act like an adult." Like yelling at a clown is a grown-up thing to do.
- A Chicago radio remote at Ben & Jerry's that garnered more business for the Ben & Jerry's owner on West Armitage than he usually has in a week or two of sales this time of year.
- Getting a group of NYPD cops to hop out of their police van for pictures in front of the ice cream truck at the Sony Music Building on Madison Ave. No donuts were involved.



10 things we think we think this month

1 **Silent Hill isn't all that Silent. There aren't many hills, either.**

2 **EA Sports needs to be more consistent. FIFA 99 and NBA Live 99 are better this year, while NHL 99 and Knockout Kings are very average. Maybe a lockout will fix things.**

3 **Developers need to learn the importance of a smooth frame-rate.**

4 **Syphon Filter marks the official kickoff of the Metal Gear Solid cloning contest. The winner will be dubbed the "Metal Gear Solid Killer" on a magazine cover.**

5 **As of the most recent report we've gotten in, Mr. Domino still can't be stopped. Maybe we could impeach him.**

6 **There will be a video game inspired by Operation Desert Fox. It'll come out just in time for the next Iraq bombing a year from now.**

7 **If the NFL reinstates instant replay, then it's a safe bet that you already know one of the "new features" in next year's crop of football games. Except for NFL Blitz, of course.**

8 **Green Bay Packers QB Brett Favre didn't make the Pro Bowl for the first time in years. Maybe he should have endorsed a PlayStation football game instead.**

9 **Watch out for another version of WipeOut sometime soon.**

10 **You haven't really experienced R4's magic until you link up four players for some real racing fun.**

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"A BEAUTIFULLY ANIMATED, INVENTIVE AND METICULOUSLY DETAILED RPG FROM THE CREATORS OF TOSHINDEN."
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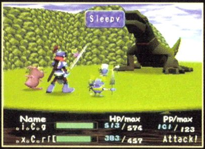
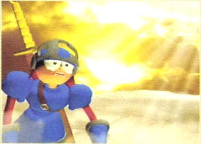
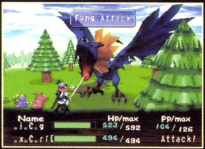


Find a morphing baby along your quest – raise an ally, or neglect him and beget a foe.



Embark on a fantastical RPG journey through an immense world of lush, anime-style graphics.



Battle with an arsenal of 71 spells and unleash a squad of Living Toys with magical powers.

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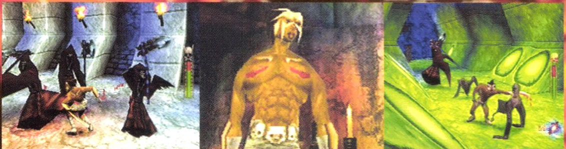
"...a step up technologically from similar titles in the past."
-EGM



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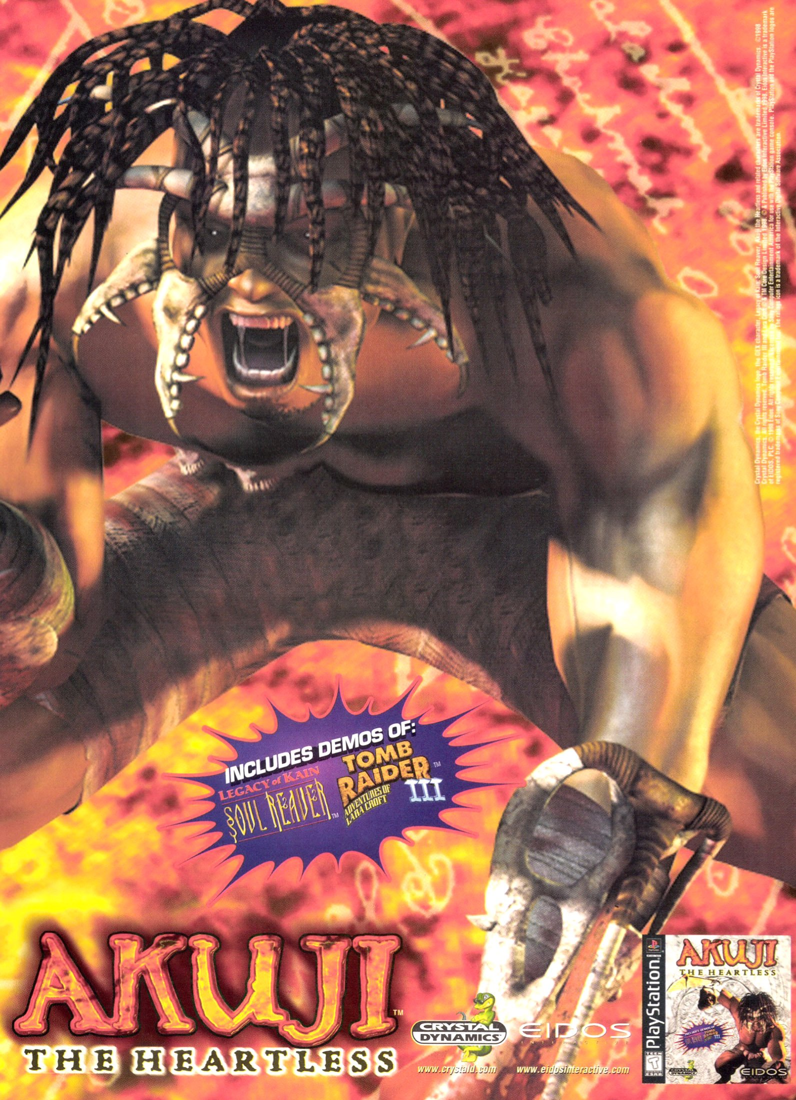
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Top 20

The best-selling U.S. PlayStation titles as reported by the nation's top retailers

1 Crash Bandicoot: WARPED! ●●●●●

Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Oct. 1998

We told you last month that Crash Bandicoot: WARPED was even better than its excellent predecessor. It looks like everyone has figured that out.

2 Metal Gear Solid ●●●●●

Publisher: Konami **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Adventure **Release Date:** Oct. 1998

Its first month on the charts, and Metal Gear Solid comes in at a respectable second. Will this action-packed game reach No. 1? It deserves to.

3 Tomb Raider III ●●●◐○

Publisher: Eidos **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Adventure **Release Date:** Nov. 1998

Everyone knows that Lara Croft has a great pair of...um...previous games. Now her latest adventure is proving to be just as popular as those two.

4 NBA Live 99 ●●●●○

Publisher: EA **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Sports **Release Date:** Oct. 1998

With the NBA lockout, EA's latest game is the best way to get your basketball fix. If they won't give us a season, we can darned well make our own!

5 NASCAR 99 ●●●●○

Publisher: EA **Last Month:** 13 **Genre:** Sports **Release Date:** Sept. 1998

After debuting down toward the bottom half of the charts, NASCAR 99 has sped up the ranks to a top-five position. People must be getting hooked.

Rank	Title	Rating	Publisher	Last Month	Release Date
6	Twisted Metal III	●●◐○○	989 Studios	–	Oct. 1998
7	Madden NFL 99	●●●●◐	EA	1	Aug. 1998
8	NFL GameDay 99	●●●●○	989 Studios	2	Aug. 1998
9	Crash Bandicoot 2	●●●●○	SCEA	5	Oct. 1997
10	WWF War Zone	●●●●○	Acclaim	4	July 1998
11	PlayStation Underground JamPack Winter		SCEA	–	Oct. 1998
12	NFL Blitz	●●●●●	Midway	6	Sept. 1998
13	Cool Boarders 3	●●●○○	989 Studios	–	Oct. 1998
14	Gran Turismo	●●●●●	SCEA	7	May 1998
15	Knockout Kings	●●●◐○	EA	–	Oct. 1998
16	Spyro the Dragon	●●●●○	SCEA	8	Sept. 1998
17	Test Drive 5	●●●◐○	Accolade	–	Oct. 1998
18	Twisted Metal 2	●●●●○	SCEA	9	Nov. 1996
19	Tenchu	●●●●○	Activision	15	Sept. 1998
20	Cool Boarders 2	●●●●○	SCEA	11	Nov. 1997

namco Presents

Top 10 Most Wanted

As compiled by our attractive, intelligent readers

1. **Silent Hill** So was last month's demo sweet or what? Just wait until you play the full game.
2. **Final Fantasy VIII** We have a feeling this is gonna be on here for a long, long time.
3. **Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver** As the release date for this game gets closer and closer, the anticipation grows.
4. **Crash Bandicoot: WARPED!** Just between us, this great game is already out.
5. **Syphon Filter** With all the excitement over Metal Gear Solid, it's no surprise, really.
6. **WCW/nWo Thunder** You can't get enough of that exciting wrestling action, can you?
7. **Soul Calibur** Remember how good Soul Blade was? We can't wait for the sequel.
8. **Quake II** Yeah, yeah...we doubted it, too, but seriously, this translation of the PC hit looks hot.
9. **Xenogears** It won some awards, so you really can't go wrong with this one.
10. **Centipede** Hopefully, this updated version of the arcade classic will be out soon.

Douglas Parker's Top 5

Our monthly contest winner's top-five picks

1. **Final Fantasy VII** While the rest of the world awaits part 8, Douglas is still flipping over Final Fantasy VII.
2. **Metal Gear Solid** Oh, baby! You know that this game rocks the most. You gotta love Metal Gear Solid.
3. **Parasite Eve** If you're creeped out by this game, be sure to check out Silent Hill.
4. **Crash Bandicoot: WARPED!** Quite frankly, you'd have to be a bit warped to not like this great game.
5. **Twisted Metal III** This game is popular even though it's not as good as the last two games.

Editors' Top 5

What we've been playing instead of working

1. **Jeopardy!** We keep playing this game to convince ourselves that we aren't complete idiots. We're losing.
2. **Silent Hill** The first in a long line of 1999's Resident Evil clones.
3. **R4** Namco's R-Racer games have always been top-notch, and this one continues the tradition.
4. **Bust-A-Move 4** Them bubble-busting dinosaurs are back one again to keep us away from our jobs.
5. **R-Type Delta** We've been waiting years for the classic R-Type series to make a comeback. It's finally here!

Send your votes for the Readers' 10 Most Wanted games to: *Official PlayStation Magazine* Attn: Readers' 10 Most Wanted, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail us at: dan_peluso@zd.com or visit the *OPM* section on www.videogames.com

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, Nov. 1998. Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Note: No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Sega Saturn, etc.) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions are written by the *OPM* staff.

Ok Pops, one more time:

kiss off the 5-Ball, bounce off the pacemaker, around the dentures, down the walker, **over** the adult diapers, across Martha's cat, back on the table to the 9-Ball

nothing but pocket!

Get ready to be immersed in the world of the pool hustlers. It's so real you'll swear that you can feel the chalk on your hand as you approach the table for another shot. So pop in your favorite cd and get ready for hours of play as you choose from a myriad of modes in Backstreet Billiards.

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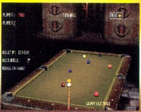
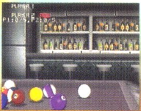
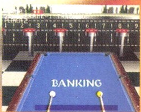
- 9 Pocket Billiard games including: 9-Ball, 8-Ball, Rotation, Basic, One Pocket, 14.1 Continuous, Bowlliards, Cutthroat, 5-9
- 5 Carom games including: 4Balls, 3Balls, Free, 1 Cushion, 3 Cushion
- Grand Total of 14 different games
- Music CD Option: insert an audio CD of your choosing to enjoy your favorite tunes while chalk'in up the old cue
- Seven unique modes to choose from: Story, Pocket game, Carom game, Practice, Trick shot, Speed, Technical
- Vibration function compatible

Backstreet Billiards™







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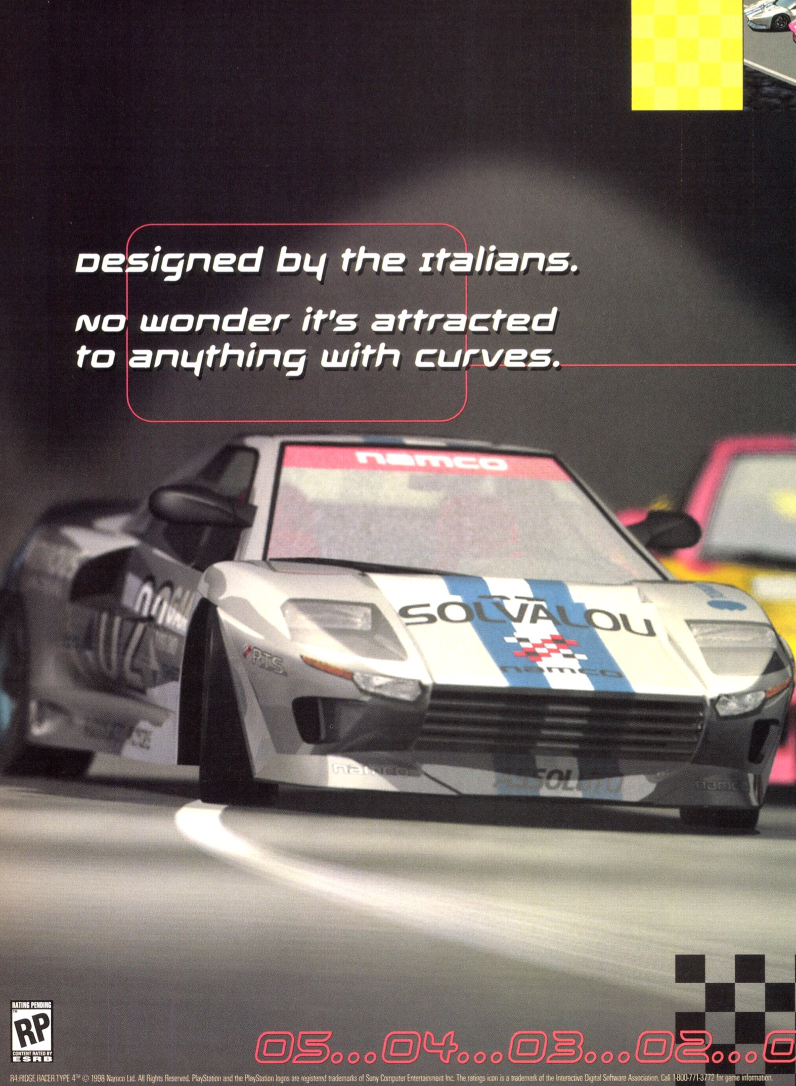
designed by the Italians.
no wonder it's attracted to anything with curves.
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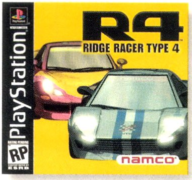
> "R4 has to be the best-looking PlayStation racer ever (yes, edging out even Gran Turismo)."
> - *Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998*



It is speed incarnate. Its sexy sheet metal restrains a 3000 cc power plant that hits 0-190 mph in the snap of a linguini. It is the Bisonte - just one of the automotive marvels that scorch the streets in R4. With over 300 new cars, 45 fantastic models, 8 thrilling courses, a 2-player split-screen mode and only one way to drive. Fast. R4's asphalt gulping graphics and spectacular racing environments deliver racing speeds that were once deemed impossible. But not anymore. Now you've got R4. Ciao, baby.

R4

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Think fast. Drive faster.

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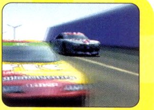
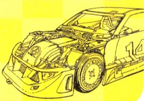
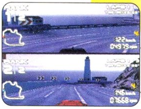
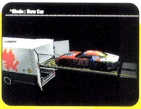
- Sensational graphics and lighting effects give every race a cinematic feel
- Race at all times of day and night, even during dramatic sunsets
- Relive your greatest moments through the dynamic-camera replay mode
- Watch your race with all-new motion-blur effects

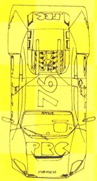




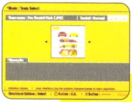


- Battle head-to-head in split-screen vs. mode

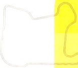




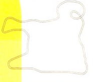
- Speed-tuned physics keep the arcade-style action fast-paced
- Championship performances unlock secret hidden supercars
- Don't be afraid to bump the other car, it's all part of a winning strategy

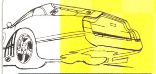


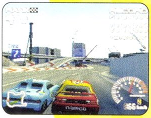
- Join one of four international race teams - each with individual strengths and weaknesses
- Design original logos to customize your car



- Race on gorgeous cityscape, countryside and racetrack courses







- Money can't buy victory. You've got to earn new cars with your race performance
- Experience all the ups and downs of a full racing season in the Grand Prix mode
- Includes a Ridge Racer Turbo Mode bonus disc with a 60 FPS track

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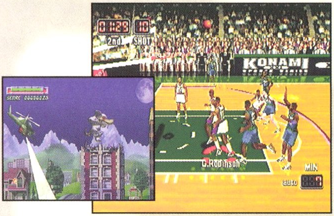
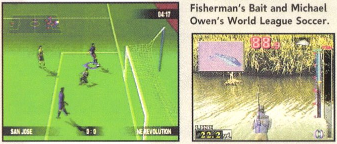
Coming Soon

Compiled by Dan Peluso with immeasurable input from Johnny Masthead





Clockwise from top left: Rampage Universal Tour, NBA In the Zone 99, Fisherman's Bait and Michael Owen's World League Soccer.

February

Army Men 3D	3DO	Action
Bass Landing	Ascii	Sports
Bass Masters Classic: Tournament Edition	THQ	Sports
Battleship	Hasbro Interactive	Strategy
Beavis & Butt-head Do Hollywood	GT Interactive	Action
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	Action
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	Racing
Centipede	Hasbro Interactive	Action
Freestyle Boardin' '99	Capcom	Sports
Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	Action
Hard Edge	Sunsoft	Action
K1 Revenge	Jaleco	Fighting
Marvel Super Heroes Vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	Fighting
NBA In the Zone 99	Konami	Sports
NHL Blades of Steel	Konami	Sports
Pac-Man 3D	Namco	Action
Pro 18: World Tour Golf	Psygnosis	Sports
Quake II	Activision	Action
Rat Attack!	Mindscape	Action
R-Types	Ascii	Action
Silent Hill	Konami	Adventure
Sports Car GT	Electronic Arts	Racing
Street Sk8ers	Electronic Arts	Sports
Syphon Filter	989 Studios	Adventure
T'ai Fu	Activision	Adventure

March

3Xtreme	989 Studios	Sports
All-Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	Sports
Attack of the Saucerman	Psygnosis	Action
Baseball 2000	Interplay	Sports
Big Air Snowboarding	Accolade	Sports
Carmageddon	Interplay	Action
Diabolical Adventures of Tobu	989 Studios	Action
Fisherman's Bait	Konami	Sports
G-Police 2	Psygnosis	Action
Guardian's Crusade	Activision	RPG
Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster	Midway	Action
Jeff Gordon Racing	ASC Games	Racing
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	Adventure
Magical Tetris Challenge	Capcom	Puzzle
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	Racing
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	Strategy
Need For Speed IV	Electronic Arts	Racing
Rampage Universal Tour	Midway	Action
RC Stunt Copter	Midway	Action
RushDown	Infogrames	Sports
Shadow Madness	Crave Entertainment	RPG
Shogun Assassins	Konami	Action
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	Action
StarCon	Accolade	Action

March (continued)

Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fighting
Superman	Titus	Action
Tail Concerto	Bandai	Action
Triple Play 2000	Electronic Arts	Sports
Xena: Warrior Princess	989 Studios	Action
You Don't Know Jack	Berkeley Systems	Misc.
War Zone 2100	Eidos	Strategy

Future Releases

Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Action
CROC 2	Fox Interactive	Action
Darkstone	Take 2	RPG
Dead Unity	THQ	Action
Elmo's Letter Journey	New Kid Co.	Adventure
Elmo's Number Adventure	New Kid Co.	Adventure
Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine	LucasArts	Adventure
Kawasaki Motocross	Activision	Racing
Looney Tunes Lost In Time	Infogrames	Action
Messiah	Interplay	Action
Michael Owen's World League Soccer	TBA	Sports
Populous: The Beginning	EA/Bullfrog	Strategy
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	Racing
Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	Action
Revolt	Acclaim	Racing
Roll Cage	Psygnosis	Racing
Shao Lin	THQ	Action
South Park	Acclaim	Action
Star Trek: Klingon Academy	Interplay	Simulation
Tomorrow Never Dies	MGM Interactive	Action
Urban Chaos	Eidos	Action
Vermin	Eidos	Action
VR Baseball 3	Interplay	Sports

All release dates are tentative and subject to change. More information on all future releases will be given as it becomes available.

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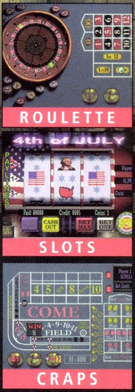
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- Super fast game play for up to 4 players
- Chart your performance with statistical analysis
- Odds and pay-outs authenticated by expert statistician William Bertram, Ph.D.
- Learn expert strategies and tips with the exclusive *Caesars Palace Guide to Gaming*

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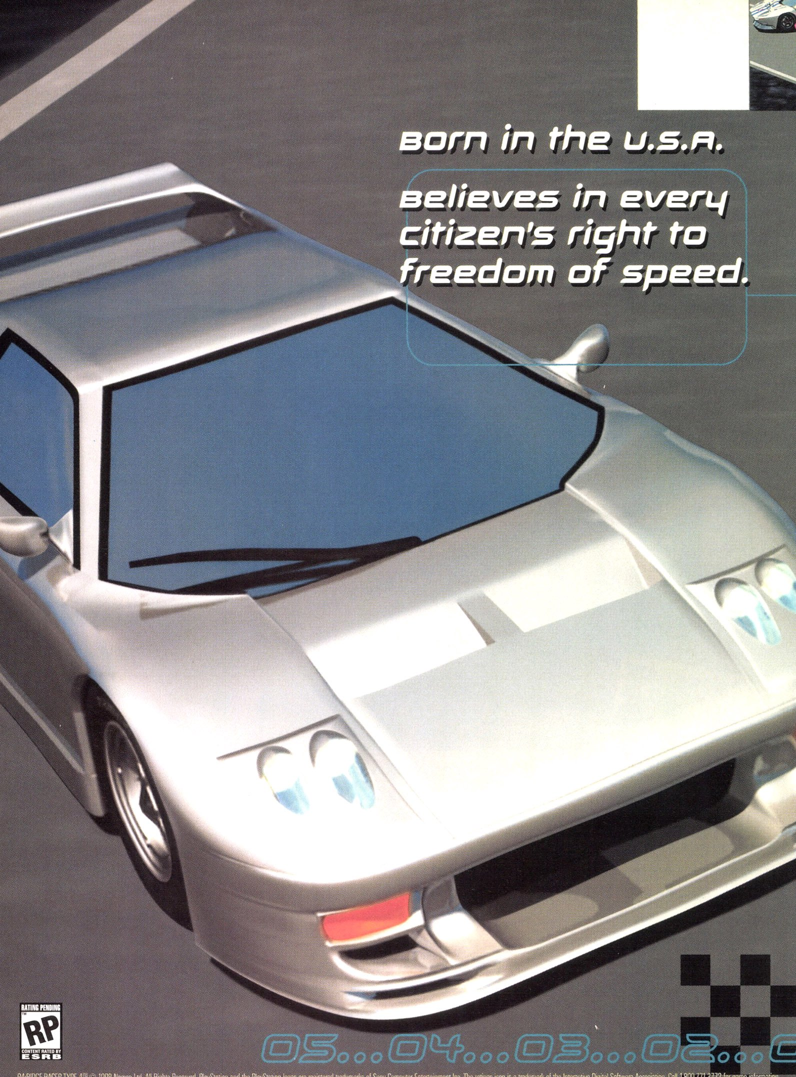
Born in the U.S.A.
Believes in every citizen's right to freedom of speed.
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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"R4 has to be the best-looking PlayStation racer ever (yes, edging out even Gran Turismo)."
- Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998

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RP
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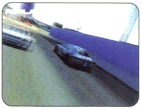
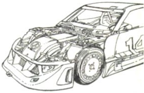
It boasts an American stock car pedigree. Built Tallahassee tough and water-moccasin fast. Its muscle-bound V8 unleashes 317 stampeding horses, as well as unlimited "Yee-Haa's!". It is the Detector - just one of the automotive marvels that torches the streets in R4. With over 300 new cars, 45 fantasy models, 8 thrilling courses, a 2-player split-screen mode and only one way to drive. Fast. R4's asphalt gulping graphics and spectacular racing environments deliver racing speeds that were once deemed impossible. But not anymore. Now you've got R4. So long, pardner.

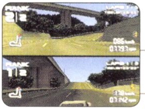
R4 RIDGE RACER TYPE 4™

Think fast. Drive faster.



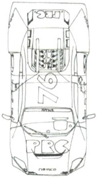
- Sensational graphics and lighting effects give every race a cinematic feel
- Race at all times of day and night, even during dramatic sunsets
- Relive your greatest moments through the dynamic-camera replay mode
- Watch your race with all-new motion-blur effects



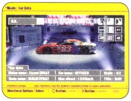


- Battle head-to-head in split-screen vs. mode

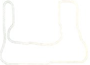
Mode : Sticker Edit

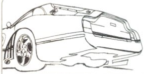


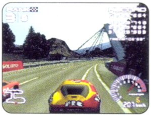
- Speed-tuned physics keep the arcade-style action fast-paced
- Championship performances unlock secret hidden supercars
- Don't be afraid to bump the other car, it's all part of a winning strategy
- Join one of four international race teams - each with individual strengths and weaknesses
- Design original logos to customize your car



- Race on gorgeous cityscape, countryside and racetrack courses







- Money can't buy victory. You've got to earn new cars with your race performance
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R4 you ready

by Mark MacDonald

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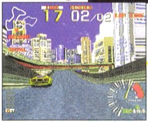
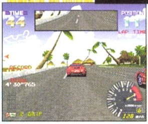
Ridge Racer



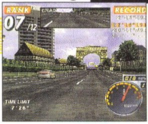
1995

Ridge Racer Revolution



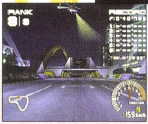
1996

Rage Racer

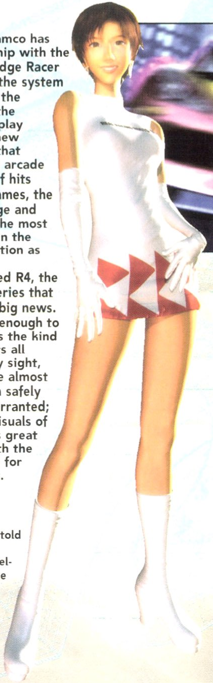


1997

R4



1998



From the very beginning, Namco has enjoyed a special relationship with the PlayStation. The original Ridge Racer debuted with the launch of the system and is often credited as one of the major reasons for its early success; the amazing graphics and spot-on gameplay demonstrated the power of Sony's new machine, giving gamers confidence that excellent translations of even recent arcade hits were possible. The long string of hits that followed—other Ridge Racer games, the Tekken series, Ace Combat, Soul Edge and more—proved Namco to be one of the most consistent and talented developers in the market today, and solidified its position as a valuable asset for the PlayStation.

So when Namco recently announced R4, the latest addition to the Ridge Racer series that started it all, it's no surprise it was big news. Just about any new Namco game is enough to turn heads, but a new Ridge Racer is the kind of thing that gets PlayStation owners all sweaty and panting (it's not a pretty sight, believe me). Having played the game almost constantly for an entire month, I can safely say the excitement is completely warranted; besides boasting some of the best visuals of any PlayStation game yet, R4 blends great new features and easier controls with the solid gameplay of past Ridge Racers for the wildest, and smoothest, ride yet.

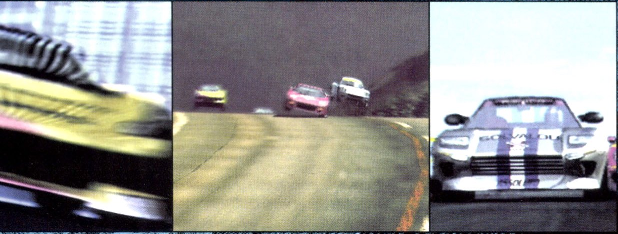
FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS

Despite what your mother might have told you, looks matter. Especially in a racing game, where a good deal of the fun is feeling like you really are tearing through the hills at 135 miles per hour, not stuck in front of a TV where your butt hasn't moved an inch in days. But standing out as a great-looking racing game on the PlayStation isn't easy—racing is one of the most popular and crowded genres in

standing · out · as · a · great-looking · raci

love and the best graphics

yet, are you ready for R4?



the system's library, with dozens and dozens of titles available and more being released every month. And, of course, that includes Sony's own Gran Turismo, a critically and popularly acclaimed visual tour-de-force (not to mention winner of the best racer of the year in the *OPM* editors' awards this issue) that all by itself raised the bar on what everyone expects from modern racing titles. And yet, within a minute of your first glance of R4 in motion, you know you're seeing the best-looking PlayStation racing game, by far.

As good as the last Ridge Racer game, Rage Racer, and Gran Turismo look and move, R4 runs circles around them. The level of detail in the scenery lining each track is amazing: small cottages, giant office buildings, bridges, tunnels, helicopters (it wouldn't be a Ridge Racer game without one hovering over the track at some point, now would it?), all sail by at a very high and remarkably smooth frame-rate. Draw-in or pop-in? Nope, none at all. You can keep your eyes fixed firmly on the horizon and it'd still be difficult to spot even one stray polygon suddenly appearing. And those thin white lines and other tiny graphical errors you're used to seeing, even in your favorite racing games? Gone as well. Without resorting to any kind of gimmicks or "cheating" (like slowing the movement down—some of the cars in R4 go up to 240 mph and definitely feel like it), Namco has succeeded in squeezing even more out of the PlayStation hardware and setting a new visual high-water mark for the machine.

But R4's graphics aren't just technically impressive; they're drop-dead gorgeous as well. Races take place at all times of the day and night, in the early morning with the tracks and surrounding scenery bathed in pre-dawn shades of blue or just at sunset, turning everything to

PocketStation Pit Stop

With 320 different cars in R4, just keeping track of which ones you have can be a challenge, not to mention making sure you collect them all. That's where the PocketStation comes in. During our visit to Namco we were given the chance to try out the new memory card/minigame system first hand with R4. After saving your R4 game to the PocketStation, you can scroll through a list of the cars you have earned in the game and trade individual vehicles with a friend's PocketStation. Just choose the trade option, choose the car you want to transfer, and point it at the other PocketStation; once your friend accepts, you'll both have that car! Easy, eh?

TEAM
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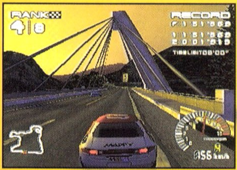
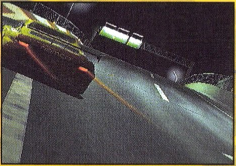
SONY

game on the PlayStation isn't easy

rosy brown. Extensive use of other colored lighting effects along with graphical improvements like gouraud shading which gives everything a less blocky, smoother and very realistic appearance. Taillights blur and bend as cars whip by, an impressive effect that gives the game even more of a sense of speed and style. One track even features fireworks exploding in the distance as you race by, which is simply awe-inspiring—until you realize six cars passed you while you were staring.





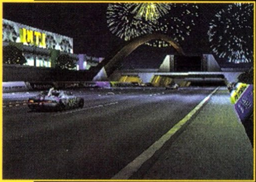
STEERING IN A NEW DIRECTION

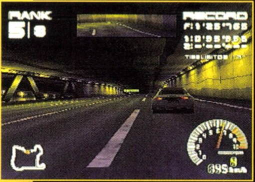
But even the best graphics are pointless without solid control and gameplay to back them up. Ridge Racer has always been about the quick, visceral feel of arcade racing, and that continues with R4. There's no changing tires for different road conditions or upgrading shock absorbers here. Realism obviously isn't key when you can whip into a turn at 200 mph and come out the other side, or crash into a banking at top speed and continue on to finish the race. But some adjustments have been made to the traditional Ridge formula for R4, both to make the game more accessible to a wider audience and to make it a more personal and involving experience.

Common complaints about the Ridge games have always focused on the difficulty. "How come I can't powerslide?" "All I did was bump the side of the track once and I lost!" "It's impossible to beat the computer! It's just too damn hard!" If you've ever said any these lines, you're not alone. Luckily Namco has implemented a few key changes to help you out.

First, powersliding in R4 is much easier than it was in previous installments of the

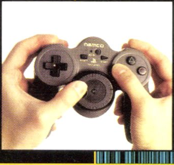
R4's breathtaking graphics are highlighted by some imaginative new uses for colored lighting and effects.



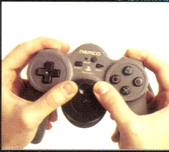


JogCon-figuration

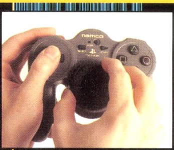
R4 will go on sale in two different packages: one with just the game and another with the new JogCon controller for about $30 more. Although it works as a standard controller (unlike the NegCon it has all four shoulder buttons), the JogCon also features a disc in the middle that spins and resists just like a real steering wheel. Very cool. But the best way to use the JogCon differs depending on whom you ask. Here's a rundown on all the majors.



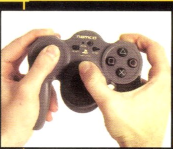
ConDitioned
Try calibrating the Jog wheel so it centers straight to the left, making it a shorter reach for your left thumb and allowing greater control. Works well.



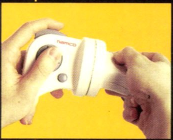
ConSistent
Putting both thumbs on the Jog wheel and using the shoulder buttons for the other controls gives you a nice, steady handle on steering.



ConVenient
Using the D-pad to shift and the shoulder buttons for the gas and brake leaves your entire right hand to steer with. Once you get used to it, this scheme works great.



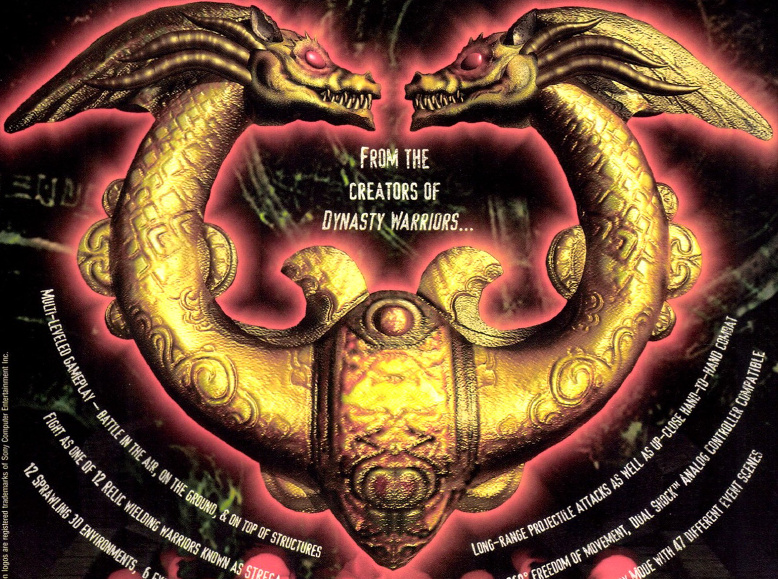
ConVentional
Although it's the default setting for the JogCon, this method isn't very comfortable or effective. We recommend you try another before your right thumb falls off.



Ex-Con
Don't forget, R4 still supports the good ol' NegCon as well. Although they are somewhat hard to find in stores these days, this smooth controller is worth tracking down.

LONG AGO, A SMALL COUNTRY WAS BESTOWED MYSTICAL OBJECTS POSSESSING MYSTICAL POWERS. BUT THESE OBJECTS, RELICS, WERE MUCH TOO POWERFUL. EVENTUALLY, THE EMPIRE DESTROYED ITSELF, SEALING ITS SECRET FOR ETERNITY. 1000 YEARS LATER, ONE MAN HAS UNLEASHED THE POWER AND ONCE AGAIN, THE CONTINENT FACES TOTAL DESTRUCTION. PIT RELIC AGAINST RELIC AS 12 INDIVIDUALS FIGHT FOR PEACE, POWER, GREED AND PROSPERITY. OBJECTS OF POWER FAIL, BUT THE SCARS REMAIN...

ROSEN
FATMA



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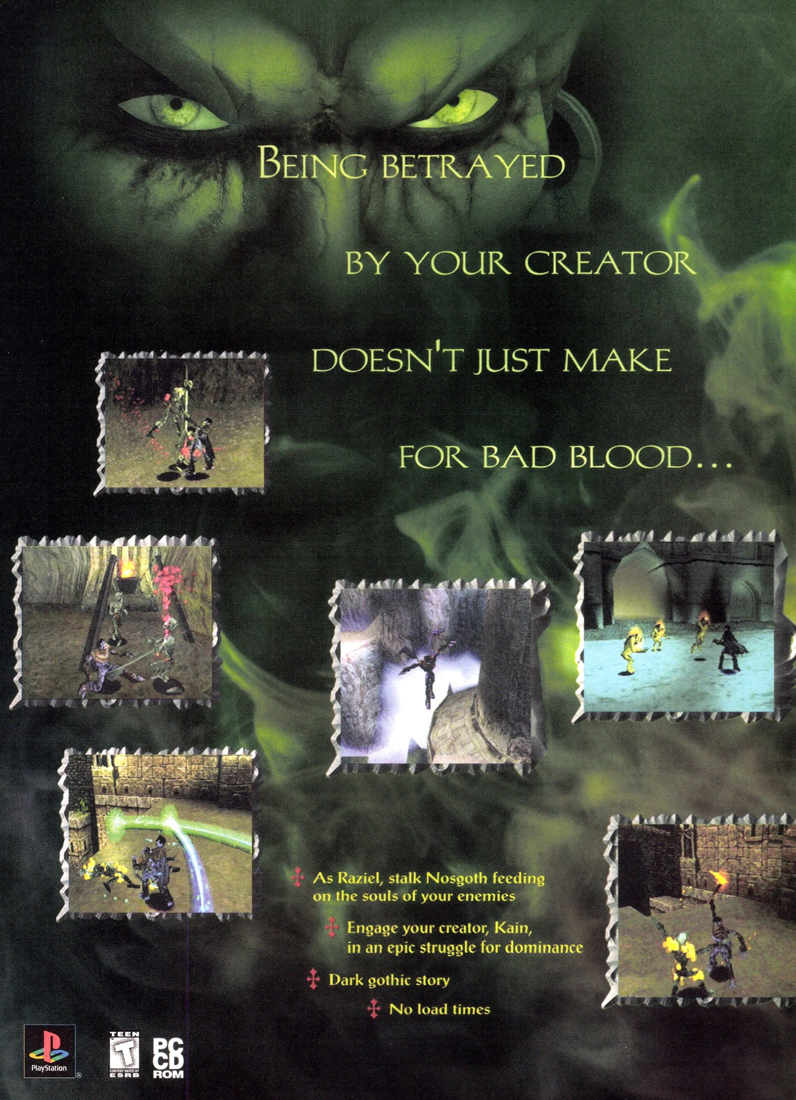
BEING BETRAYED
BY YOUR CREATOR
DOESN'T JUST MAKE
FOR BAD BLOOD...
PlayStation
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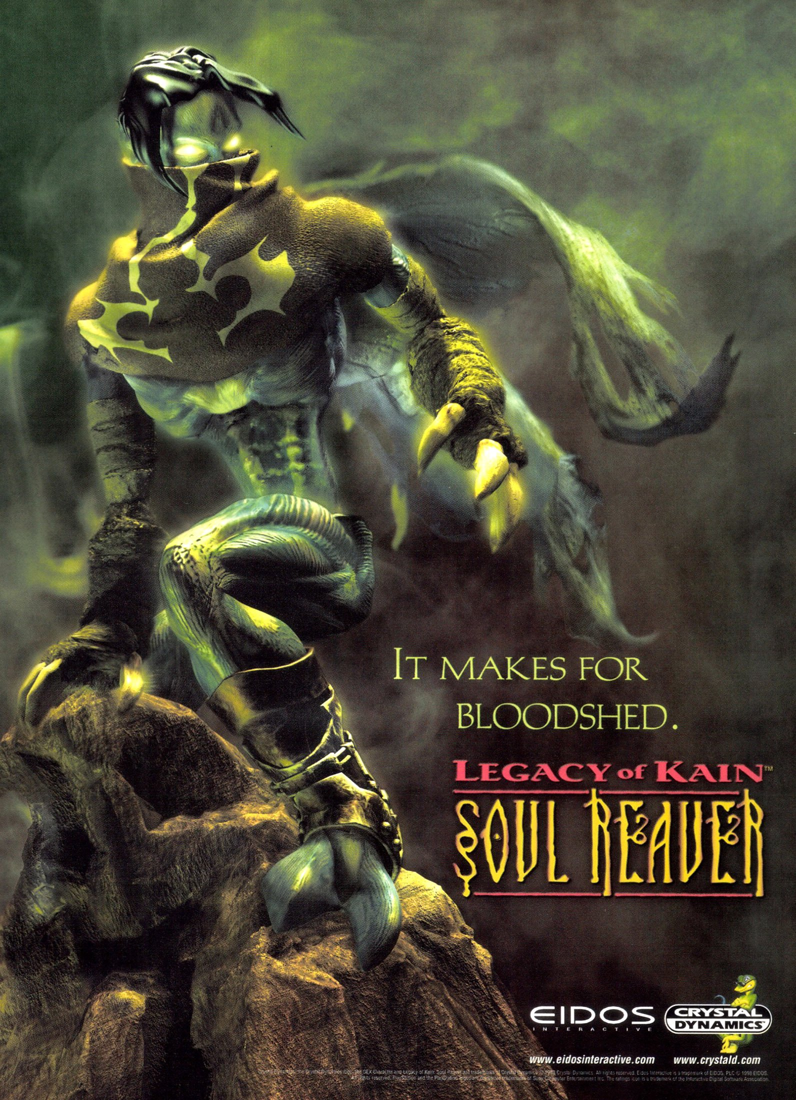
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PC CD ROM

- As Raziel, stalk Nosgoth feeding on the souls of your enemies
- Engage your creator, Kain, in an epic struggle for dominance
- Dark gothic story
- No load times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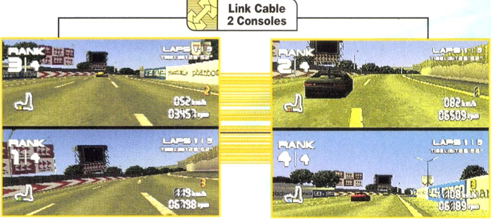


Finally, Ridge Racer multiplayer! R4 has both a two-player Split-Screen Mode and link cable support for up to four racers at once.

series. Starting your slide is still a matter of simply steering into a turn and tapping the brake, but instead of twisting wildly or even spinning around if you don't time your skid perfectly, R4 is much more forgiving about letting you come out of your slide pointed in the right direction. Of course there are still better and worse ways to take a turn, and experienced players will quickly shoot past beginners, but at least those new to the game don't have the frustration of spinning and slamming into a wall at every curve.

Which brings us to the next area that received an important adjustment: When you do happen to nudge into a wall or another car, you lose some speed, of course, but not as much as you used to. Where before you may have been doomed to losing a race for making just one mistake, in R4 you usually still have a chance to regain the lead and even finish in first place.

THE GRANDEST PRIX OF THEM ALL

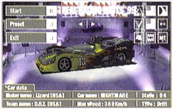
Greater care has also been taken with R4's Grand Prix Mode. As the focus of the single-player game, the Grand Prix lets you choose between four racing teams with associated difficulty levels: easy, normal, hard and expert. Before and after each race you talk with the team's leader through a series of still frames and text, discussing how you did in the race, what the press is saying about you, what the owner thinks, etc. Nothing too in-depth, but a nice addition that makes players care more about how well they perform and involves them further in the game.

The races themselves are set up in three stages. In the first there are two matches where you'll need to finish in one of the first three positions (out of eight cars) to qualify and continue on. The second stage consists of another two races where you need to place first or second. For the final stage of four races, it's first place or nothing. Between stages you earn a chance to save your game and acquire a new vehicle; which car you get depends on how well you performed in the preceding stage (i.e., if you come in first place each time, you'll get a better car than if you came in second or third).

On the other hand, if you're just looking for a quick race or want to take one of the new cars you've earned out for a spin, there are the Time Attack and the Extra Trial modes. Just pick your track and car and you're off. Time Attack is you against the clock—great for learning your car or a certain track that might be giving you trouble without any distractions. The Extra Trial mode (which is only available after you beat the game once on any difficulty) pits you against a single computer-controlled car of the same model you selected, for the added drama of a little competition. Perform well and you may even be rewarded with another new car to race with.

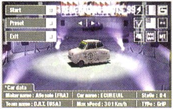
photo by Mich

The · Devil · Cars



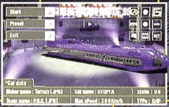
*Car data
Maker name : Lizard [USA] | Car name : NIGHTMARE | Stage : 04
Team name : D.R.T. [USA] | Max speed : 369Km/h | Type : Drift

The Lizard Nightmare is a topnotch race car in just about every category—acceleration, top speed and handling. Not to mention it looks kick-ass.



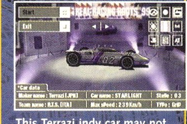
*Car data
Maker name : Age solo [FRA] | Car name : ECUREUIL | Stage : 04
Team name : D.R.T. [USA] | Max speed : 301Km/h | Type : Grip

Sure you wouldn't be caught dead driving this teeny-weeny little European number in real life, but it's actually not a bad car in R4.



*Car data
Maker name : Terrazi [JPN] | Car name : UTOPIA | Stage : 04
Team name : P.R.C. [JPN] | Max speed : 399Km/h | Type : Grip

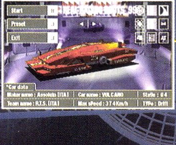
Get behind the wheel of this monster jet-car only after you've mastered Grip type cars.



*Car data
Maker name : Terrazi [JPN] | Car name : STARLIGHT | Stage : 03
Team name : R.T.S. [ITA] | Max speed : 239Km/h | Type : Grip

This Terrazi indy car may not have a very high top speed but it sticks to the road like superglue. Great for the more twisted and curvy tracks.

Looking like it flew straight out of WipeOut, this Assoluto hovercraft has all the speed and good looks you could ever want in a vehicle (just be careful on those turns).



*Car data
Maker name : Assoluto [ITA] | Car name : VULCANO | Stage : 04
Team name : R.T.S. [ITA] | Max speed : 374Km/h | Type : Drift

An Interview with R4 Executive Producer

Shigeru Yokoyama

How long did it take to make R4? What was the hardest part of development?

It took a year and a half to make R4. All of the game was equally difficult—programming, art direction, gameplay, sound, music—because we wanted to make R4 the best racing game possible. The whole process was very difficult and required a lot of work.

Do you feel you have maxed out the power of the PlayStation hardware?

I believe so, but in the past I thought we had maxed out the PlayStation with other games. So who knows? We may find out later that we haven't utilized everything possible on the PlayStation.

The other big racing game for the PlayStation obviously is Gran Turismo. Have you played it? What do you think of it, and has its success at all affected R4?

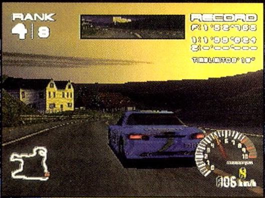
Yes, of course I've played GT. I can honestly say I was very surprised to see how realistic the game is. As a player I love games in the simulation genre, so I love to play Gran Turismo. But from a creator's standpoint, R4 is similar only because they are both racing games. The games are totally different in their direction. Our team conceived of the Ridge Racer series first and foremost as a game—a racing game—and not a simulation. Gran Turismo may have been a sales success but that's not a reason for us to change our vision of the Ridge Racer series. At the same time, the success of GT has energized our team to make a game that will surpass it in every aspect.

What importance do you place on realism versus the game being fun or easy to play?

As I mentioned in my previous point, gameplay is the most important. For example, if there's a corner that you're trying to take at 200 mph, well, only Superman would be able to pull off a feat like that. We could make a simulation-style game to reflect those physics, but it wouldn't be any fun. The concept of a game is to create an experience that allows as many people as possible to enjoy something that they can't experience in ordinary life. For example, one key to the Ridge Racer series is the way we incorporated sliding around corners. In reality, this is an extremely difficult move. But in our game, we not only allow people to feel that they are able to perform this maneuver, but also to feel, "Hey, I'm a really cool driver—look what I can do!" At the same time it's essential that we create the most realistic graphics possible. The mix of ultra-realistic graphics and environments combined with game-tuned physics creates the absolutely most-exciting experience.

Just out of curiosity, what kind of car do you drive in real life?

An old, beat-up SUV.



ROOM FOR 4

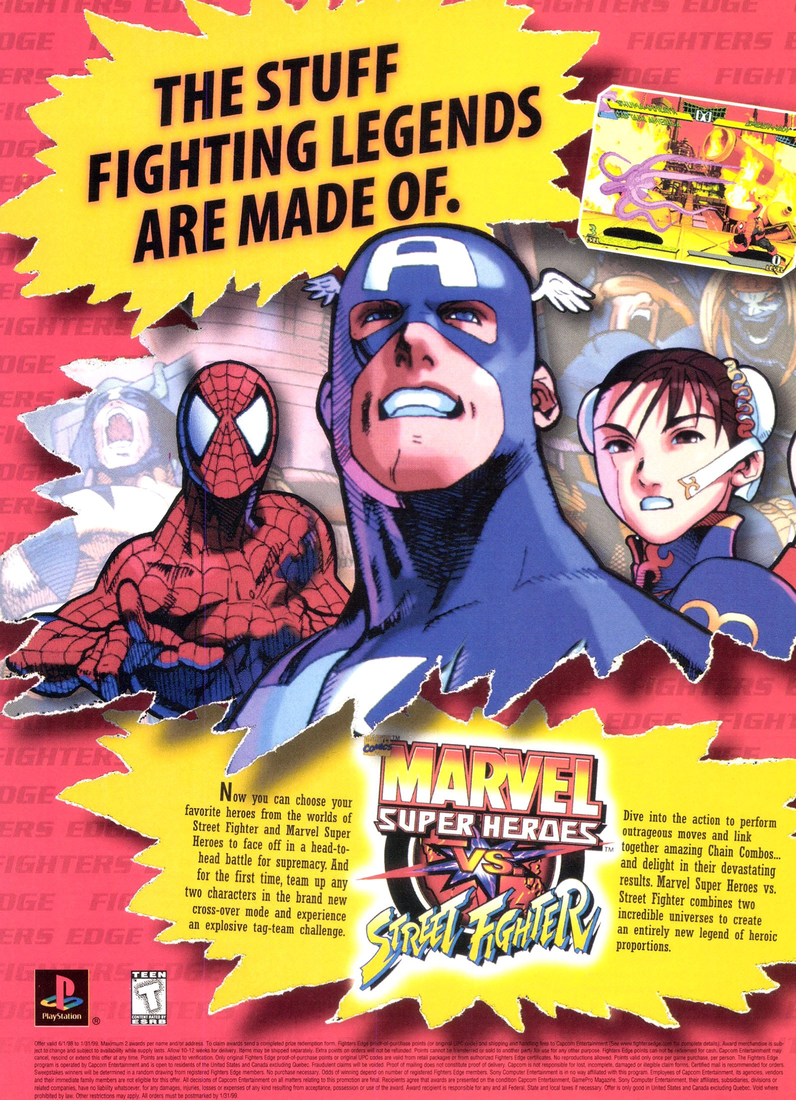
But as we all know, scurrying for position and swerving to block someone coming up on your tail is always more satisfying when it's your friend you're racing against, not the computer.

Even though each new Ridge Racer has added important features to the last, none has included this most important feature of all—until now. Namco has finally added a multiplayer option to the Ridge Racer series in R4, and it turns out to be the strongest part of the game. The split-screen two-player game looks and plays perfectly, with no noticeable loss in detail or frame-rate. Plus, with a link cable, a second TV and PlayStation, and another copy of R4, you can even hook up for the ultimate multiplayer racing contest—four-player simultaneous racing. Anyone who has experienced the thrill of the giant arcade multiplayer racing games knows just how exciting this extra mode can be.

As a Ridge Racer game, R4 certainly has a lot to live up to. People expect great things from Namco, and especially from a new game in one of their most popular flagship series. Luckily, with its amazing good looks, solid controls, expanded one-player mode and added multiplayer support, R4 looks more than able to fill the giant shoes of its famous predecessors.

02
LAP TIME
0' 22"600

R4 will also ship with a second CD containing the original Ridge Racer, improved graphically and running at an unbelievably smooth 60 frames a second!



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BLACKHEART
3 LEVEL
2 LEVEL
WINS 1
VEGA
49
WINS 1
WOLVERINE
CHUN-LI
1 LEVEL
2 LEVEL
WINS 2
SPIDER-MAN
VEGA
46
WINS 1
CHUN-LI
DHALSIM
2P
3 LEVEL
2 LEVEL

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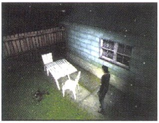
Theme Adventure	**# of Players** 1
% Complete 75%	**Availability** February
Publisher Konami	**Developer** Konami

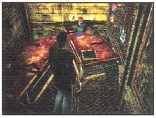
Silent Hill

It's always the nicest towns that go bad...

Prepare to be scared. Really scared. Konami's Silent Hill is steadily advancing in its development cycle, and each stage is more terrifying than the last.

In case you've missed last month's playable demo, Silent Hill is a moody horror adventure that takes the atmosphere of Resident Evil and throws it into a fully 3D environment—which would be reason enough to check it out for most people. But Silent Hill takes the atmosphere even further by throwing in a seriously disturbing soundtrack that swells and shifts in time to on-screen events, a dynamic camera that dives and swoops for impressive cinematic effects, and dramatic light-sourcing that heightens the mood (much of the game takes place in environments lit only by the main character's flashlight—talk about tension!).

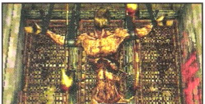


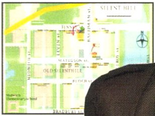


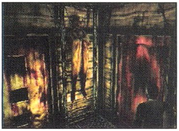
This new version opens up new areas, allowing the main character to roam throughout the town in search of his lost daughter. What's most impressive about the setting is the realism. Although the graphics aren't the best we've seen on the PlayStation, they manage to convey a sense of realism that makes the game all the more engrossing. From the back alleys to the residential streets, the little village of Silent Hill feels like a real town, fog and all.

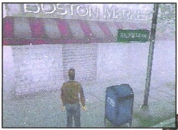
Also added to this version is a limited number of voice-overs. Konami tells us that once the game is finished, all the text will be spoken aloud. Thankfully, the voice acting so far sounds entirely adequate. Characters convey believable emotion, in most cases adding to the atmosphere even more. One scene, in which the lost girl cries for her daddy through a broken telephone, is absolutely chilling.

The game still has a few rough spots that need to be smoothed over—things like translation, minor control glitches and timing of voice-overs—but these are to be expected in a game at this stage. Right now, the game's only seriously questionable area is its rumored length. Sources say the game may weigh in at a mere six hours to completion, but our extensive play time so far makes this seem an extremely unlikely estimate. We'll know for sure when the reviewable version arrives within the next month or two. But as of right now, the game looks simply terrifying.

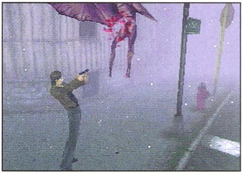




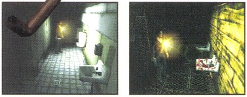




We have to assume the name of this place (left) will be changed for the final version...



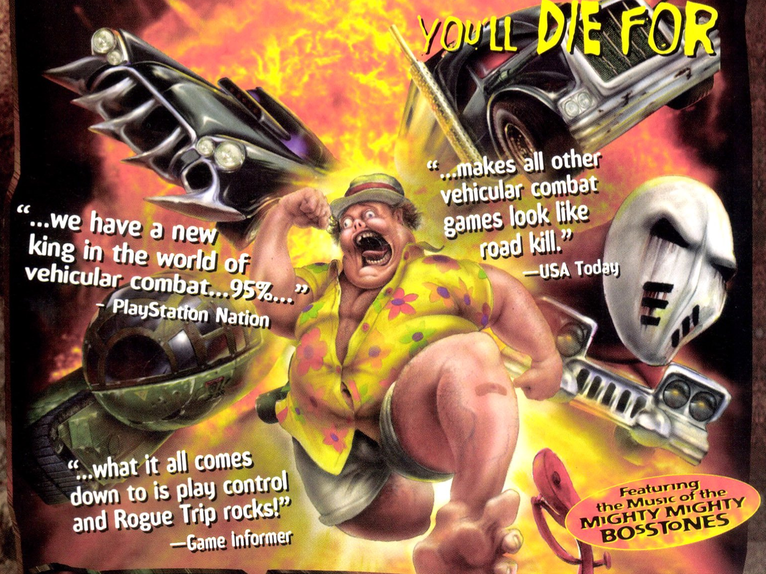
Flying enemies are just one of the new hazards roaming through the sleepy town of Silent Hill.



The Dark Half

Amazing how redecorating can really change the feel of a place. Our hero heads to Midwich Elementary in search of his daughter, but soon finds that the relatively normal school (left) has a twisted, evil side (right).

THE VACATION THEY'D KILL FOR IS THE VACATION YOU'LL DIE FOR



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> – PlayStation Nation

> "...makes all other vehicular combat games look like road kill."
> —USA Today

> "...what it all comes down to is play control and Rogue Trip rocks!"
> —Game Informer

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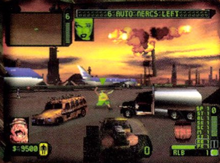

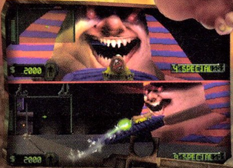

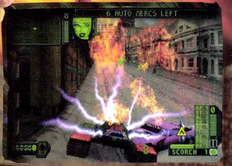

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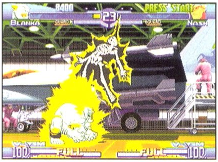
Theme Fighting
# of Players 1-2
% Complete 75%
Availability March
Publisher Capcom
Developer Capcom

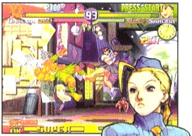
Street Fighter Alpha 3

Capcom is poised to deliver one of their best arcade conversions yet

Capcom groupies have been lining up in droves for Street Fighter Alpha 3 ever since it debuted for beta-testing in Japan last summer. For all those stateside who just can't get enough of Ryu and his contemporaries, Capcom will bring home Street Fighter Alpha 3 in the spring of 1999. Fortunately, Street Fighter Alpha 3 on the PlayStation looks to be superbly faithful to the arcade version, and even improves on the original by offering extra modes and characters only available for the home version.

Despite Capcom's dubious track record for PlayStation arcade conversions, Street Fighter Alpha 3 is shaping up to be one of their most impressive feats ever. This time around, the Street Fighter Alpha 2 alumni are joined by more than 10 additional characters stylishly redesigned for their new Alpha incarnation. Back from the old group are Blanka, Honda, Cammy, Balrog, Vega and Cody (from Final Fight). They're joined by newcomers Karin, Juli and Juni. Capcom has also confirmed that T. Hawk, Fei-Long and Dee Jay will also join the impressive roster.

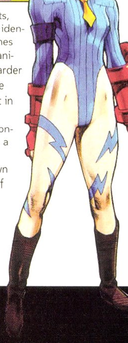


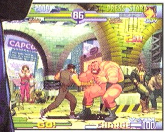


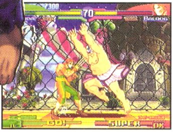
Two significant gameplay tweaks to Alpha 3 are the additions of the "guard crush" and ISM fighting system. Depending on your fighting style, Street Fighter Alpha 3 lets you choose from three different modes of gameplay—or ISMs, as they are called. Each ISM has unique advantages and disadvantages, which are detailed below.

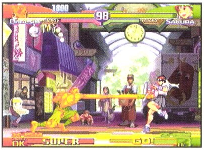
Even more exciting is the World Tour Mode, which allows players to travel the world with their favorite fighters, building up their attributes, powering up their ISMs and even learning entirely new techniques.

While there are some obligatory animation cuts, the graphics in Street Fighter Alpha 3 are nearly identical to the arcade. Unless you place the two games side by side, it's very difficult to see the drop in animation frames—although some characters are harder hit than others. Similar to previous Capcom home conversions, same character Vs. Modes will result in added animation (for instance, with the animation-heavy Zangief), which was a nice touch on Capcom's part. Fortunately, slowdown also seems to be a thing of the past, resulting in an overall excellent port of what's easily the best Street Fighter Alpha ever.







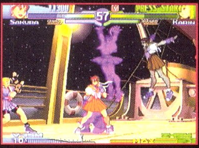


Although hardcore fighting enthusiasts might notice a few missing frames of animation, the game looks nearly arcade perfect.

The ISMs

X-ISM:
This mode derives its name from Super Street Fighter 2X, the Japanese equivalent of the U.S. Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo. X-ISM is often referred to as "Simple Mode" due to the fact that your Guard Power Gauge is extended (useful for players who turtle) and all regular or special attacks do more damage. Obvious disadvantages in X-ISM include the lack of air blocking, ground recovery rolls, alpha counters or taunts. Also, all characters have only one preset Super Combo.

A-ISM:
The A-ISM Mode gets its name from the "Alpha" series. A-ISM gives you plenty of abilities that the other modes lack, including air blocking, ground and air recoveries, alpha counters, taunting and all the Super Combos available to each character. On top of that, your Super Combo meter fills up nice and fast. Disadvantages for A-ISM include mediocre hit damage and character-dependent Guard Power Gauges, which means certain characters get guard crushed easier than others.



V-ISM:
This mode is by far the most creative of the three. V-ISM is derived from "Variable Combo" system, which allows you to string your own combos by activating a delayed shadow (press the same strength punch and kick in the air). V-ISM also gives you all the advantages of A-ISM, except all characters in V-ISM do less than average damage and it costs half a Custom Combo gauge to perform an alpha counter. Definitely not for beginners, but once mastered, V-ISM can easily be considered the most powerful ISM in the game.

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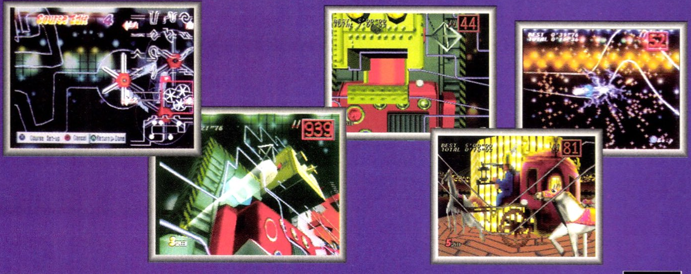

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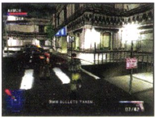
Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	85%	**Availability**	February
Publisher	989 Studios	**Developer**	Eidetic

Syphon Filter

Tough guy Gabe Logan looks to out-tough Solid Snake

Hoping to clean up in the wake of the holiday season, 989 Studios is putting the finishing touches on Syphon Filter, a modern-day spy thriller that's equal parts James Bond and Solid Snake.

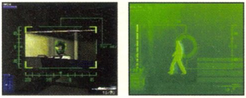


Developed by Eidetic (which designed the, er, less-than-stellar Bubsy 3D), the game puts players in the shoes of tough government operative Gabriel Logan as he attempts to foil a ring of biological terrorists bent on taking over the world. The folks at Eidetic clearly have been doing their homework, because even at this relatively early stage the game seems quite solid, and the environments are just about as realistic as one would hope.

Players observe Gabe racing through the large environments in a third-person over-the-shoulder view. Since Gabe tends to do a lot of shooting, players have the option of using a semiautomatic targeting system with which Gabe will continue to aim at a given target even if he is no longer headed in the same direction. This leads to some interesting shots of Gabe firing to the side or over his shoulder, which looks surprisingly convincing and seems to work rather well. In addition to these mild acrobatics, Gabe can crouch behind low obstacles to avoid fire, and can even walk hunched over to maintain protective cover.

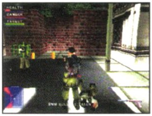
To thwart the nasties, Gabe will need to use a huge variety of high-powered weaponry, from silencer-equipped pistols and sniper rifles to devastating grenade launchers and plastic explosives. But don't assume the game is a Duke Nukem-style blastfest; stealth and cunning are every bit as important as a well-equipped gun rack. Infrared scopes and a silent-but-deadly electric taser will help take out the enemy without causing a ruckus. There are certainly times when Gabe will need to pull out the ol' M-16, but it's rarely without cause; he will find himself needing to guard bomb experts as they defuse the viral explosives the terrorists have stationed around the city. Let a member of the bomb squad get offed before he does his job and your mission's a bust; this is when a quick trigger finger is most helpful.

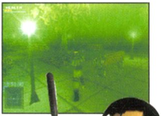
At this point, even the slippery, not-yet-tweaked controls don't keep Syphon Filter from being one of the more promising-looking titles of the new year. Hopefully, even these issues will be addressed before the game's release. If so, it may turn out to be one of this year's sleeper hits.

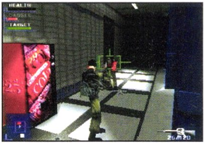


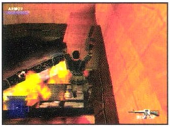
Ready... Aim...

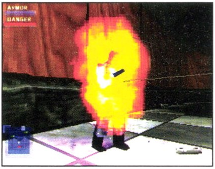
Some of Gabe's rifles come equipped with a special sniper scope. The standard sniper rifle includes an intelligent targeting system (left), while the night vision rifle (right) includes heat-sensing technology.







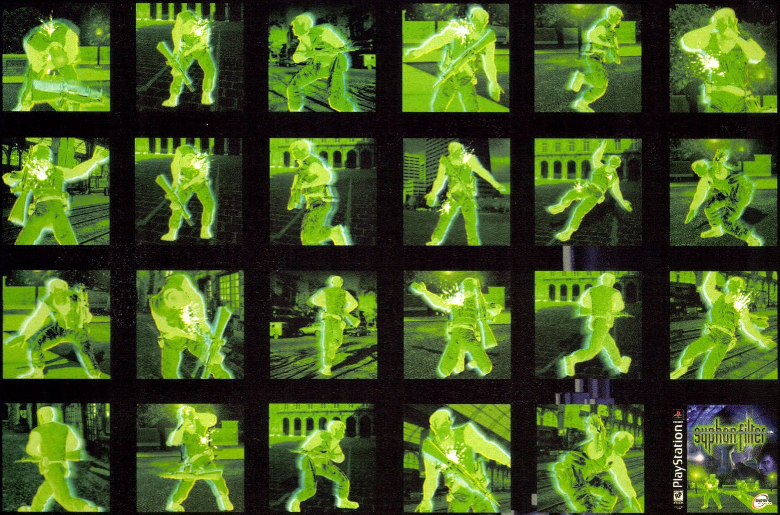




The far-reaching Taser spontaneously combusts your enemies for a nice, painful barbecue.

METAL GEAR SOLID VS. SYPHON FILTER

	METAL GEAR SOLID	SYPHON FILTER
HERO:	Gruff, take-no-crap cynic	Same
GEAR:	Ultra-high-tech arsenal	Ditto
BACKUP:	Sexy-voiced Asian cutie	Yep
ENEMIES:	Ski-mask-wearing, cookie-cutter drones	You see where we're going with this, don't you?
STORY:	Nuclear war threatens life as we know it	Engineered virus threatens life as we know it
SETTING:	Frigid Alaska	Torrid Washington, D.C.
SADISTIC THRILLS:	Break guards' necks with chokehold	Fry enemies alive with electrically charged taser
DEVELOPER:	Responsible for the most revolutionary game of 1998	Responsible for Bubsy 3D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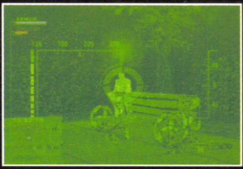

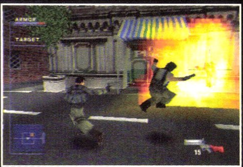
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Because in this life, and the next,
what goes around,
comes around.

◆

If you
choose
not to give
to your
friends,
you may
have to
give up your
friends.

◆

If you
choose not to
take from
your friends,
you will
remain the
amateur little
novice
your friends
always said
you were.

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If you
choose
not to accept
the characters
that others have
created,
you will learn
nothing,
remain stagnant,
and die
an early,
painful
death.

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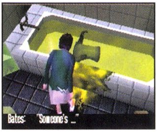
Theme Adventure	**# of Players** 1
% Complete 75%	**Availability** March
Publisher Ascii	**Developer** Human

Clock Tower II

Hey, it's a horror game that's *nothing* like Resident Evil!



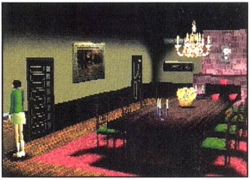
Mmm, torso soup (above). Alyssa will have plenty of chances to get familiar with this lovely little lady (far right).

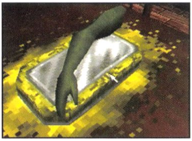
Ever have one of those days? You know, you wake up on the wrong side of the bed, you just can't get going, you stall your car on the way to work or school, you have hallucinations of slaughtering your friends and then discover that a strange entity is living in your head...

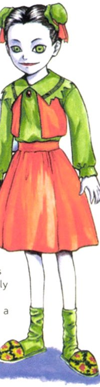
Alyssa Hale is having one of those days. After going through all the rest of it, she arrives at the house of her father's friends, the Tates, only to find no one home—or, at least, no one *whole*. She does find miscellaneous body parts strewn about the house, but none of these appear to be entirely human. While poking around, she runs into a positively terrifying little girl who seems to have murder on the brain. All the while she's struggling with Mr. Bates, a separate entity that takes over her body whenever she loses possession of a certain blood-red amulet.

Employing the same unusual point-and-click interface as the original, Clock Tower II takes this premise and turns it into a sort of single-family-home murder mystery that elicits memories of classic horror films—only with a bit more gore. OK, a *lot* more gore.

At this relatively early stage, the game's story appears sharply linear, but it certainly has its share of jump-out-of-your-seat surprises and grisly plot twists. Perhaps even a bit more campy than the original, the game should nevertheless interest fans of horror films and games alike.



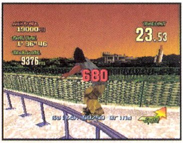




Theme Action	**# of Players** 1 to 2
% Complete 75%	**Availability** March
Publisher Electronic Arts	**Developer** Micro Cabin

Street Sk8er

Electronic Arts takes boarding back to the streets

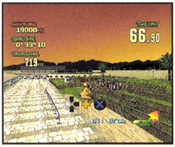


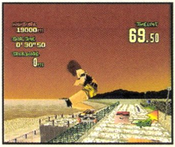
The first time you perform a trick you earn various bonus points, encouraging you to experiment and try new stunts.

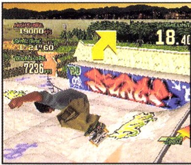
Electronic Arts has left the slopes to take 'boarding back to its roots. Street Sk8ter returns to the streets, bowls and halfpipes that skateboarders have been thrashing for years.

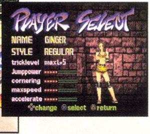
Before you can grab your board, you must choose your skater wisely. Skaters are rated in four categories: jumping, turning, top speed and acceleration. In Street Tour Mode, those skills had better be up to the challenge of racing and grabbing big air as you maneuver through the course, balancing trick points against the need to reach the next checkpoint. To clear the course, you must earn lots of points and reach the finish line in time. After you've completed the courses, hidden paths and secrets are unlocked and the points required to clear the course is increased. If you aren't up to racing against the clock, there's also a Free Skate Mode. Turn off the timer and shred the course at your leisure, experimenting with different tricks and exploring the settings. Or just tackle the Versus Mode with a friend. Each player challenges the course, then your totals are compared and bragging rights are assigned.

While variety isn't an issue, some touching up of the controls is needed, and we hope EA adds analog support as well (highly likely). We look forward to EA addressing these irritations, because Street Sk8ter shows definite promise.







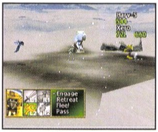


THE FUTURE HAS ONE TINY HOPE FOR SURVIVAL

Theme	RPG	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	February
Publisher	Crave	**Developer**	Craveyard

Shadow Madness

A dark RPG with some bright features

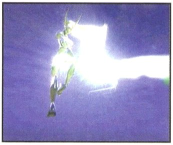


Battles are 3D and require you to move around to engage or avoid enemies (above).

If filmmaker Tim Burton ever made a role-playing game, it might look a lot like Shadow Madness.

Full of all the eerie charm of movies like *Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Edward Scissorhands*, Crave Entertainment's RPG is set in a world plunged into chaos by a plague that makes people go mad in fear of their own shadows. SM places an oddball cast in a world of prerendered backgrounds, sharp dialogue and moody music.

SM takes full advantage of the Dual Shock controller. For example, players can use the analog stick to explore SM's world without having to mash the directional pad while pressing a run button. The rumble feature is also used during exploration and battle sequences.



Fights are fast-paced, with enemies that attack even while you're deciding on your next move. A twitch button lets you boost the damage you inflict if you press it at the right time. There's also a range of standard attacks, plenty of spells and the ability to move around on a 3D battlefield to strategically engage or avoid different enemies.

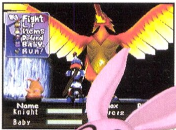
One of SM's most intriguing features is its "battle avoidance system." Prior to a fight you'll hear a faint roar and feel a rumbling in your Dual Shock. If you're quick enough, you can press and hold the R2 and L2 buttons until the rumbling subsides, thus avoiding the battle.

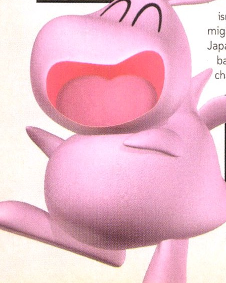
With a sharp story and some nifty features, SM might just pull the role-playing genre further out of the shadows.

Theme	RPG	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	March
Publisher	Activision	**Developer**	Tamsoft

Guardian's Crusade

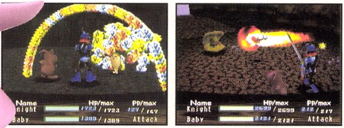
Fire-breathing dragons, swords, spells and...diapers?





Activison is developing quite an eye for imports; after picking up and improving the excellent Ninja-stealth game Tenchu, they have now set their sights on Toshinden developer Tamsoft's quirky take on RPGs, Guardian's Crusade.

Released in Japan under the name "Knight and Baby," Guardian's Crusade isn't exactly your standard RPG (as you might have guessed from its somewhat strange original Japanese title). Sure you have the standard turn-based battles, miniquests, and towns filled with shops and chatty people, but GC features two more peculiar major elements that set it apart from other RPGs. First is your companion throughout the game: a small, doughy, pink monster named Baby. During your quest to return the poor lost thing to its mother, you can train it like a pet—using meals and praise to encourage its good behavior or scolding it to teach it a lesson. Don't be too harsh, though—you'll need Baby's strong bite and morphing abilities in combat.



Two examples of the the Living Toys' effects: Marilyn's floral arrangements heal the party (left) while Barbeque lives up to his name.

The other interesting new aspect in GC is the Living Toys, or LTs, that you collect during your travels. These small characters can be pulled out during combat and used like spells—either to attack your opponents or to heal your party. There are over 70 different LTs, from such standard fare as ninja and samurai characters to more intriguing ones like Hobo Joe and the enigmatic Mr. O'Neal. Hopefully the rest of Guardian's Crusade will live up to the refreshing promise of its unique gameplay features when it comes out this March.

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(Story on page 3.)

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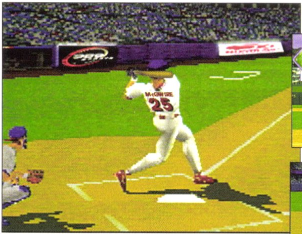
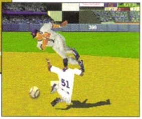
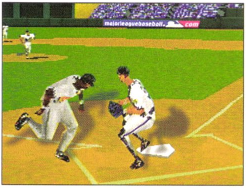




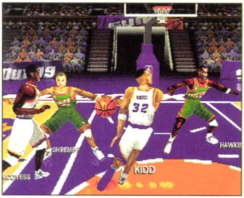


MLB 2000

989 Sports' MLB series has consistently delivered the best all-around baseball game, and this year it comes armed with lots of new features. Among them are Total Control Pitching, which allows you better control to "paint the corners" with tough pitches, an improved Managerial Mode, and a refined two-man commentary that features Vin Scully and Dave Campbell.

Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 50%	**Availability** May
Publisher 989 Studios	**Developer** 989 Sports

Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-8
% Complete 80%	**Availability** Now
Publisher 989 Studios	**Developer** 989 Sports

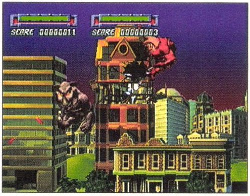


NBA ShootOut 99

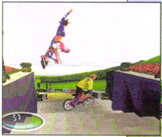
After a disappointing 1998 edition, 989 Sports is almost ready to release NBA ShootOut 99. Total Control Shooting is one of the major additions, allowing more control over the aim and loft of shots. A new television-style presentation is being implemented, and there will also be a Team Momentum Bar that is very similar to the momentum bar found in March Madness. Hopefully, the NBA will have resumed by the time this game comes out to get us all in the mood to actually play an NBA video game.

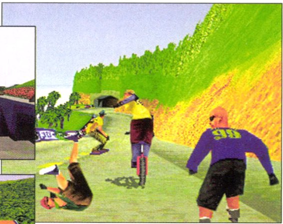
Rampage Uni. Tour

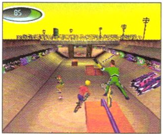
Well, it looks like destroying cities around the globe just wasn't enough, so now the gang from Rampage is taking on the universe in Rampage Universal Tour. Some of the improvements include sharper graphics (the creatures have much more depth to them now) and a few new extraterrestrial monsters to trample more helpless citizens with.



Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-3
% Complete 65%	**Availability** March
Publisher Midway	**Developer** Avalanche







3Xtreme

The popular Xtreme series is back with a slew of changes. Aside from the completely 3D game engine, 3Xtreme will be a much more in-depth game than its predecessors. Players can race and perform numerous tricks on bikes, skateboards, and skates on 22 tracks with 12 different characters. Hidden courses and racers can also be found within the early stages of the game.

Theme Racing	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 50%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher 989 Studios	**Developer** 989 Studios

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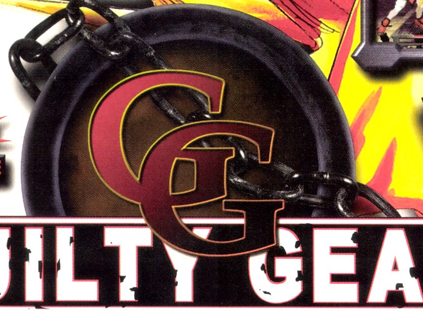

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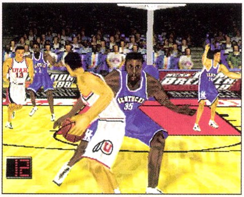
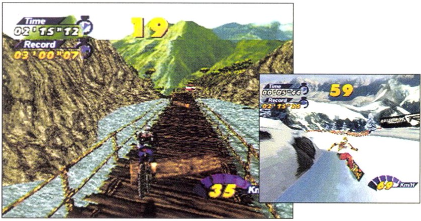
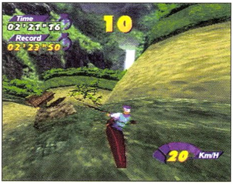
Theme	Sports	**# of Players**	1-8
% Complete	50%	**Availability**	March
Publisher	989 Studios	**Developer**	989 Sports



NCAA Final Four 99

Hot on the heels of EA's March Madness 99 is 989 Studios' first entry into college hoops, NCAA Final Four 99. As you might expect, the game will be similar in style to NBA ShootOut 99, but will implement many of the things unique to the college game, such as atmosphere, zone defenses and end-of-season awards. Quinn Buckner will make the calls accompanying the game's television-style presentation.

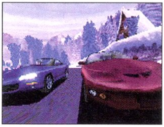


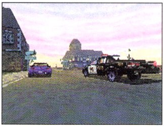


Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	75%	**Availability**	March
Publisher	Electronic Arts	**Developer**	Canal

RushDown

Looking for a different type of racing game? RushDown might be just the thing for you. This rugged racing game offers the choice of kayaking, snowboarding or mountain biking in five different locations ranging from the Colorado River to the Amazon jungle. There are fifteen different "tracks" to race on, and two different race modes. It looks like an interesting take on "extreme games," especially since the game sports music from six rock fusion and jungle music bands from France.





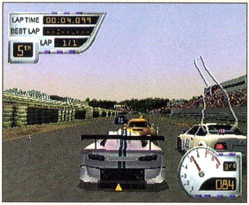
Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	60%	**Availability**	March
Publisher	Electronic Arts	**Developer**	EA Canada

Need For Speed 4

Need For Speed 3 was narrowly beaten by Gran Turismo as *OPM's* Best Racing Game of 1998, but EA is already hard at work putting together the sequel. The big improvements for the latest version seem to be centered around the different ways you can compete against a friend or the computer. There will be modes to compete for prize money or for pink slips (where you get your opponents' car if you win). You can also upgrade your car to get that much-needed edge. Other new features include personalized license plates (we can think of some great obscene ones), visible damage to your car that will affect its performance, and greater variety of environmental options (weather, time of day, etc.) to add more spice to your races.

Sports Car GT

EA seems hell-bent on taking over the racing category on the PlayStation, doesn't it? Sports Car GT has more than 45 licensed cars including the BMW V3, McLaren F1, Vector M12, Panoz GTR1, Saleen Mustang, and Callaway C7 & C12. Sounds a lot like Need For Speed, doesn't it? Well, it is, except that it's on a more professional racing level.



Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	February
Publisher	Electronic Arts	**Developer**	Westwood

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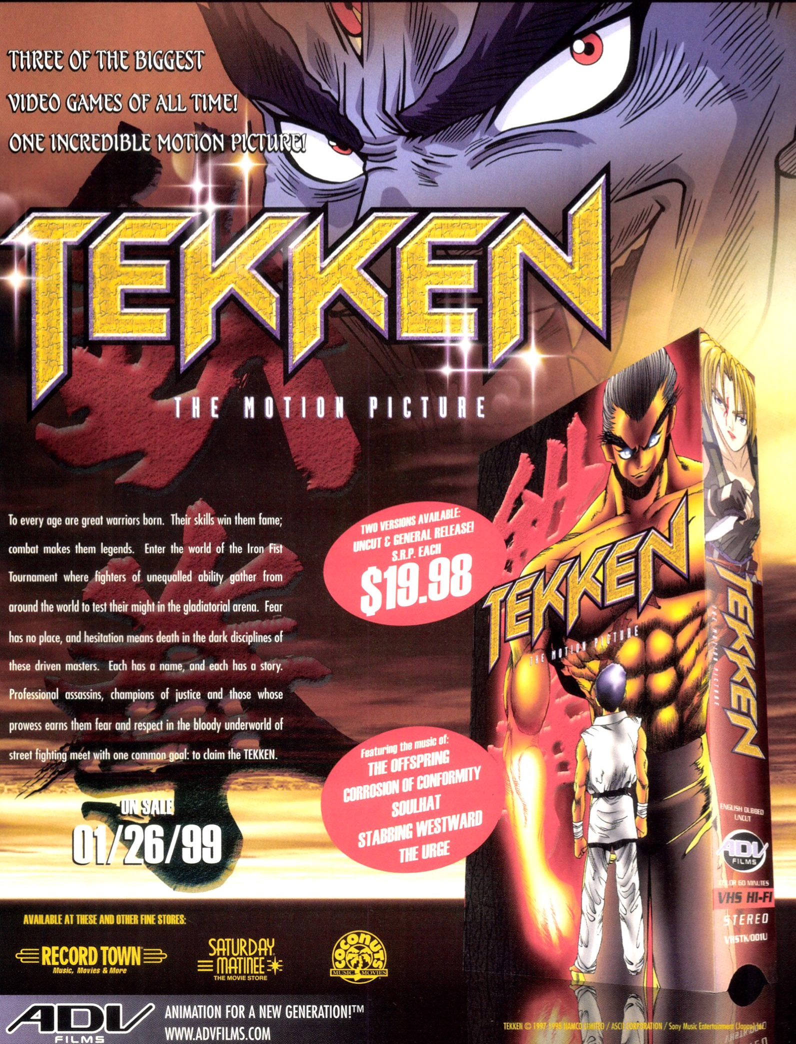
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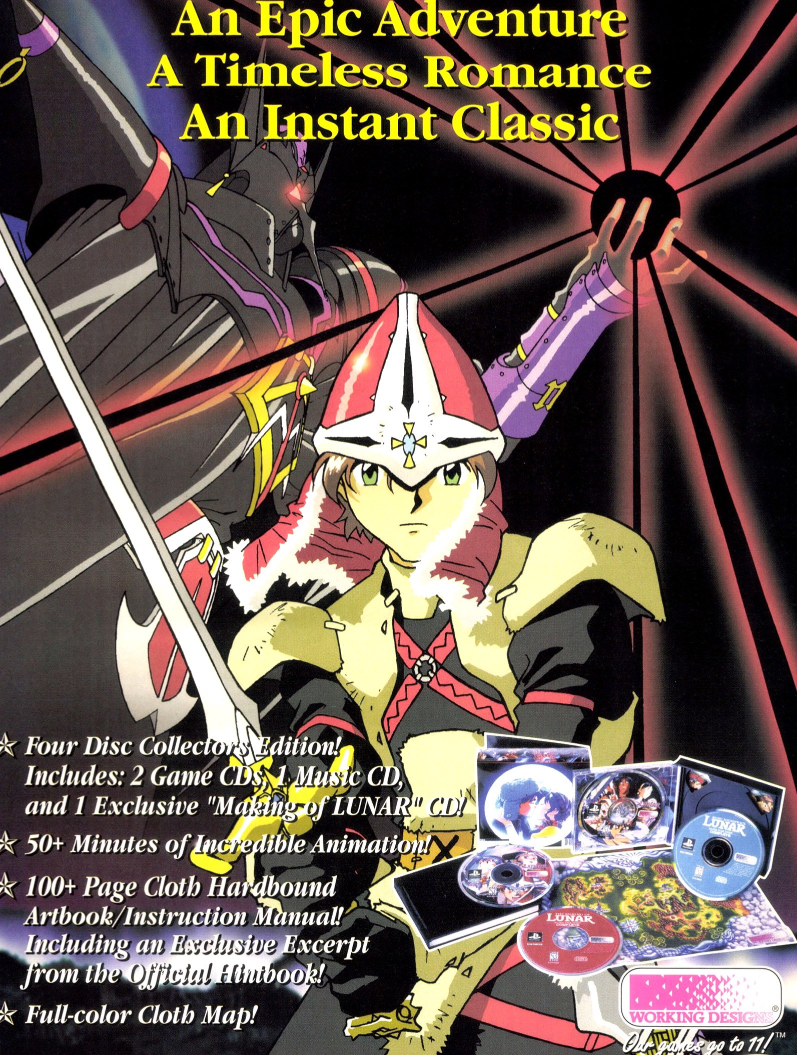

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Ace Combat 3

Namco, Availability: 1999

It took a while, but Namco finally announced the third installment in their popular Ace Combat flight/action series, Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere. From these shots it looks like it will have all the amazing graphical effects Namco perfected in making R4. No Japanese release date has been announced yet, but it's a pretty safe bet we'll see this one over here eventually.

Tron ni Kobun

Capcom, Availability: 1999

Technically not a sequel but a "side story" to last year's Rockman Dash game (known as Megaman Legends in the States), Tron ni Kobun turns the tables on the standard Megaman formula as you control Tron, the main villainess in the first game.

Capcom Generations Volume 4

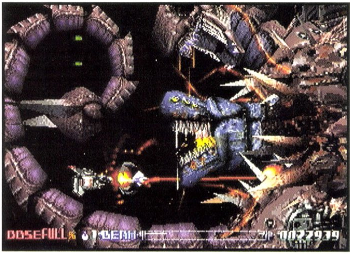
Capcom, Availability: Now

Included in the latest retro-compilation disc are the arcade classics Commando, MERCS (billed in Japan as Commando 2, by the way) and Gunsmoke—which if you never saw it is basically Commando set in the Old West. Great for fans of any of these games, especially with your TV on its side and the multitap for three-player simultaneous MERCS action! Yeah, baby!

R-Type Delta

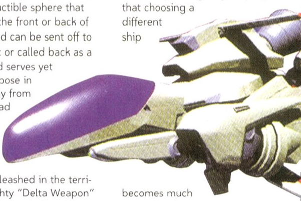
Irem Software Engineering Inc.

Move over, Einhander—there's a new king of shooters on the PlayStation. R-Type Delta has finally arrived and it's everything shooter fans could have hoped for: mind-blowing graphics, awesome levels, huge bosses and that classic R-Type gameplay refined to near perfection.

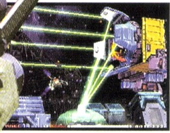


The focus of the game, as in most of the series, is on R-Type's patented "force pod" power-up. The indestructible sphere that attaches to the front or back of your ship and can be sent off to wreak havoc or called back as a sort of shield serves yet another purpose in Delta: Energy from destroyed bad guys or enemy fire can be stored in it and then unleashed in the terrible and mighty "Delta Weapon" attack, a huge explosion that envelops everything on screen.

Each of the three different ships you can choose from at the start of the game has its own unique force pod with varying characteristics. For example, the RX ship's pod has a mind of its own; launch it off your ship and it will search and destroy enemies independent of whatever you are doing. The R13's pod, on the other hand, won't target enemies by itself, but remains connected to your ship by a line of energy that can damage your enemies. Each of the different types of weapons you can gain likewise varies depending on your pod, so that choosing a different ship becomes much more than just a cosmetic extra; it's almost like playing a whole new game. Entire levels that you had mastered with one ship have to be learned all over again, which not only makes for a nice change of pace every once in a while but also adds fantastic replay value.

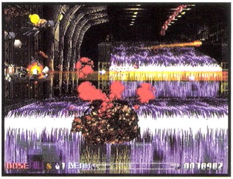


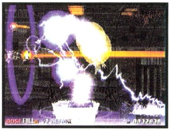
Graphically, nothing on the PlayStation looks as good as Delta. In fact only Einhander even comes close. From the rubble of a post-apocalyptic metropolis in the first stage to the far-out lighting and crazy visuals of another dimension in the last, Delta has enough fully polygonal eye candy to satisfy even the most jaded gamer.



Add in an excellent difficulty curve (players get three continues to start, six after three hours of play and unlimited after six hours) and you have the tightest shooting package yet for the PlayStation.

No word on any U.S. publisher yet, but with R-Types coming (see our review on page 79), we can only hope that it's new big brother will make it over as well.



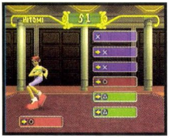


Theme Shooter
# of Players 1
Availability Now
Developer Irem

Dance! Dance! Dance!

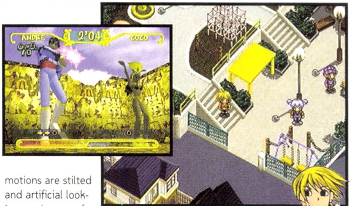
Konami

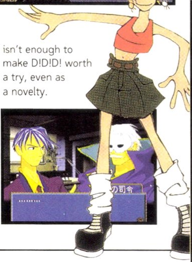
You might assume from these screenshots that Konami's new Dance! Dance! Dance! would be just like Bust A Groove, but you'd be wrong. Sure, both games let one or two players pick a character and then try to out-dance each other by comboing button taps to the beat, but there's one important difference—Bust A Groove does it well.



Every category that Bust A Groove excels in, D!D!D! comes up disappointingly short. The characters are dull, the dance motions are stilted and artificial looking, and worst of all the soundtrack is horrendous. We'd rather listen to Uncle Angus singing German folk music, and we don't even have an uncle Angus. And while you can swap in your own CD and use it for the music, it doesn't seem to really affect the timing of the dancing like it should.

In all fairness, D!D!D! does have one aspect that really sets it apart: an RPG-esque Quest Mode where you can travel around the city talking to people and, of course, dancing. Unfortunately it isn't enough to make D!D!D! worth a try, even as a novelty.



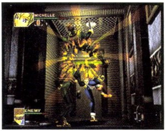


Theme Dance/RPG **# of Players** 1-2
Availability Now **Developer** KCES

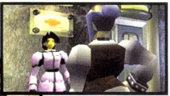
Hard Edge

Sunsoft

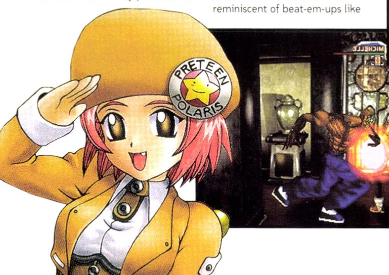
If it wasn't for the emphasis on quick hand-to-hand combat, you could safely label Hard Edge a blatant attempt to clone Resident Evil. Sure, it takes place in the future, and terrorists are behind the evil plot instead of the Umbrella Corporation, but the similarities far outweigh the differences. Polygonal characters on static rendered backgrounds, familiar find-the-key puzzles, real-time cutscenes to advance the story line, even the cheesy voices seem borrowed right out of Capcom's classic.



True, there's a lot more action to be found here, somewhat reminiscent of beat-em-ups like Fighting Force, but of course that's not necessarily a good thing. Characters can dash, backflip, block, do combo punches and kicks, and wield knives and batons in addition to the obligatory pistols. Unfortunately, even with all these moves control is a chore, and although the graphics are occasionally up to par, there is way more slowdown than can be forgiven.



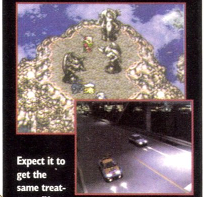
Maybe some publisher will pick up Hard Edge and fix it up, since most of its problems seem technical—but don't hold your breath.

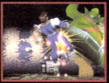


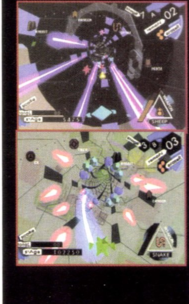
Theme Adventure **# of Players** 1
Availability Now **Developer** Sunsoft

Square

You'd think with Final Fantasy VIII's Japanese release date just around the corner on Feb. 11, Square would slow down a bit, but oh no. Check out all the new titles they announced this month: First is a remake of Final Fantasy VI (which we know as Final Fantasy III). Expect it to get the same treatment IV and V did for the PlayStation (i.e., nothing new but added intro and ending rendered FMV). Next is Racing Lagoon, a hot looking driving game described as...a racing RPG? Hopefully what exactly that means will become clear before its release this spring. Game number three is the the sci-fi action game Cyberorg, where you play as any one of three characters searching for a missing spaceship. Some of the 3D dungeons almost seem to resemble Tomb Raider levels from the few shots released; look for it this spring in Japan. And finally there is iS: Internal Section, spun as a "Digital art shooter." Hmm, looks more like Tempest to us. One cool feature is, you can put in your own music CD to play iS along to if you so desire. Square promises awesome visuals and frantic pacing when iS (and no, that isn't a capitalization error, that's just how cool this game is) comes out Jan. 28 in Japan.







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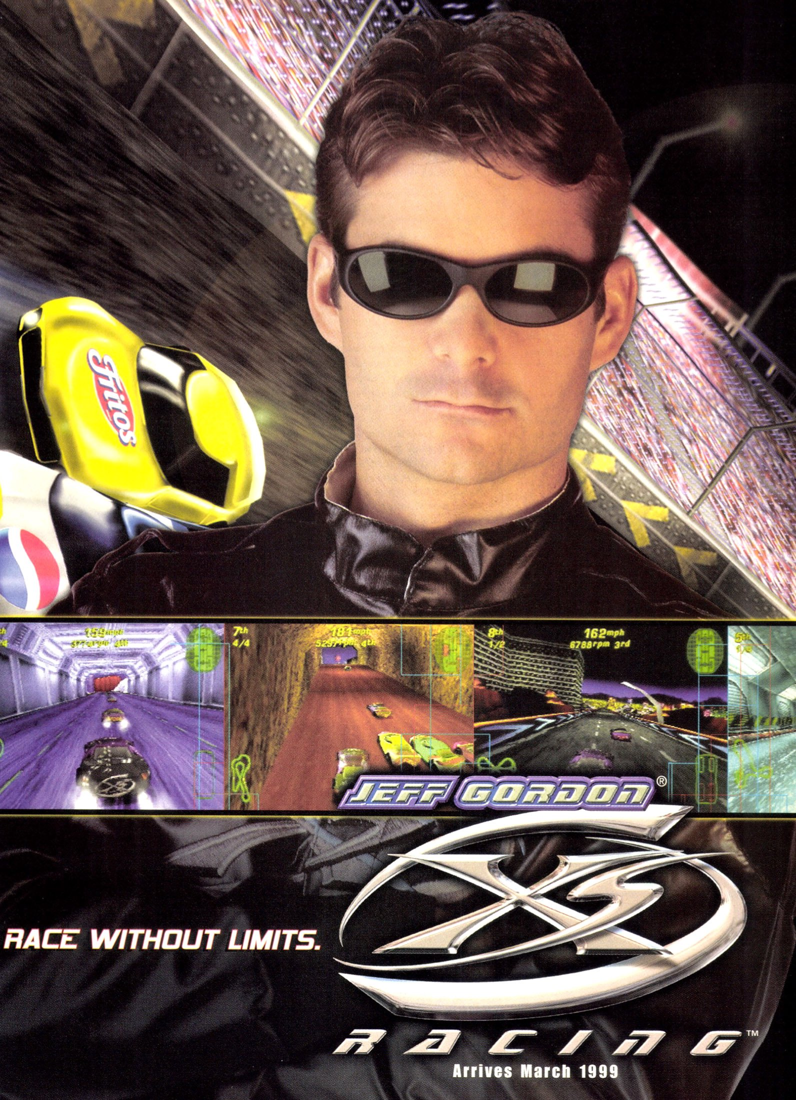
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4/4
8th
1/2
162mph
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Reviews

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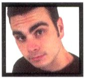
Meet the Critics



Kraig Kujawa

Editor-in-Chief

Well, Kraig was pleasantly surprised by a lot of things this month. Contender and FIFA 99 turned out to be excellent, and he was picked as the JogCon hand model for the R4 feature. Life just doesn't get any better than that, does it?

Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy, Action
Current Favorites: Contender, BAM 4, FIFA 99
Can't Wait For: His new office to be functional

Joe Rybicki

Deputy Editor

Now that we've all moved, Joe's glad to have the entire demented *OPM* staff within earshot. He doesn't miss his nice, warm, dark, quiet office a bit. Not one bit.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, RPG, Puzzle
Current Favorites: Silent Hill, Jeopardy!, Syphon Filter, Fugazi's Steady Diet of Nothing
Can't Wait For: FFVIII, any legitimate PlayStation 2 specs, power strips, E3!

Wataru Maruyama

West Coast Editor

Things are beginning to quiet down on the software side, which means Wat can concentrate on his favorite hobby: sleeping. He plans to wake up in a few weeks just in time to review whatever goodies have come in.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, Adventure
Current Favorites: NBA Live 99, Nectaris
Can't Wait For: Gran Turismo 2, R4, SF Alpha 3

Mark MacDonald

Associate Editor

It's been quite a trying month for Mark—lots of travel, being passed over as the JogCon hand model, the move to a new office, a speeding ticket, bland shish kebab—everything seemed to be conspiring against him.

Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Adventure, Puzzle
Current Favorites: Capcom Gen. Vol. 4, R4, R-Type Delta, R-Types, the letter R
Can't Wait For: Silent Hill, Final Fantasy VIII

Update and Conquer

by Wataru Maruyama

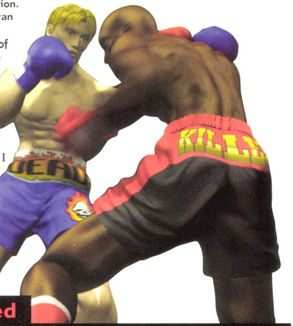
Quick, ask yourself this question: If you were a PlayStation game developer sitting on a good franchise title, how would you go about updating it?

OK, let's start with the core audience for your game. How loyal have they been to the brand? Are you satisfying their needs? Are you pushing away the core audience by trying to appeal to new players? What to do? Of course, the answer depends on your particular title. Let's take a look at two companies in this very same predicament. I've picked two games I'm very excited about: Namco's Ridge Racer 4 and Capcom's Street Fighter Alpha 3.

For the long-time fan, R4 updates the familiar formula of great music, sharp graphics and classic slide-turning action. To compete with other racers like Gran Turismo, R4 throws in a new Circuit Mode, tons of secret cars and some of the best graphics the series has ever produced. The car controls have been simplified a bit and are no longer reminiscent of the original Ridge Racer, which should make it accessible to new players. While I can't give a verdict until the final version is out in the States, I think it has the potential to be the most successful installment yet.

Street Fighter Alpha 3 takes quite a different approach. Capcom has had problems in the past porting their brand of kinetic 2D fighting action to the PlayStation, but all that's behind them now. Alpha throws in everything a Street Fighter fan could possibly want and more, like the largest cast of SF fighters ever, with selectable play modes that allow players to fight in their favorite revision style. The action is super-tight, as are the graphics and animation. This is a Street Fighter fan's fantasy. Does it have much appeal to new players? Not really, but anyone who has ever liked Street Fighter will pick up this title, which should make it plenty successful.

So while there aren't nearly enough original titles introduced, it would seem less of a curse if franchises could be updated as well as these two have been instead of bringing out more of the same with just a handful of enhancements.



Games Reviewed

Bust-A-Move 4....................83
Contender..........................86
Dead in the Water.............86
FIFA 99...............................82
Jeopardy!............................87
Kensai: Sacred Fist...........80
Nectaris..............................82
R-Types...............................79
Ten Pin Alley......................80
Uprising X..........................83
WCW/nWo Thunder 79
Wheel of Fortune...............87

Box Score

It doesn't get much more simple yet effective than *OPM*'s five-disc rating system. Very few games are lucky enough to get our golden five-disc salute, but if one does, be sure to pick it up!

●○○○○ We would rather wear a diaper filled with cottage cheese than play this.

●●○○○ Below average. There's some fundamental flaws with this game; get something better.

●●●○○ A good title. It's a fun game with some flaws that can be overlooked.

●●●●○ Definitely a topnotch game. Very good and well worth your time.

●●●●● Fabulous! These are the games that really make you proud to own a PlayStation.

R–Types

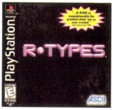
Classic 2D shooting at its finest

Although the series has appeared dozens of times, on every system from the Game Boy to the TurboGrafx 16 to the Amiga, there has never been a truly arcade-perfect R-Type for a home system—until now. R-Types includes pixel-for-pixel accurate ports of classic arcade shooters R-Type and R-Type II—which, unlike some other recent retro-compilation titles I could mention, are two games that definitely merit revisiting.

So what's to love in a pair of 10-year-old arcade games, even if they are done perfectly? Well, basically everything except the graphics. All the intense dodging and maneuvering, wave after wave of baddies and bullets, the awesome power-ups and different weapons, the huge multi-screen enemy battleships—everything R-Type did so well that most other shooters even today can't match. Visually, yes, the games look dated. That's not to say they look bad—they don't at all—but they have lost that state-of-the-art "wow" cache they once held, to be sure.

Still, there are few games that demonstrate the importance and timelessness of great gameplay better than R-Types. Anyone who enjoys 2D shooters owes it to himself to check it out. *—Mark MacDonald*

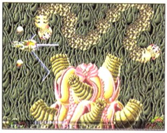
Developer	Irem/Racdym
Publisher	Ascii
Genre	Action

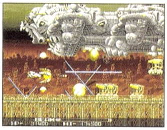


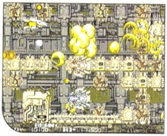
1 Player

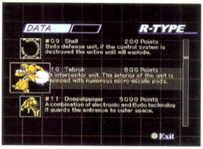
Memory Card 1 block

Vibration Function Compatible









#09 Shell 200 Points
Bydo defense unit, if the control system is destroyed the entire unit will explode.

10 Tabrok 800 Points
n interceptor unit. The interior of the unit is uipped with numerous micro-missile pods.

#11 Doppelganger 5000 Points
A combination of electronic and Bydo technolog
It guards the entrance to outer space.

Like any good retro collection, R-Types includes plenty of extras, like a detailed history as well as info on the ships and enemies of the R-Type universe.

Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Fantastic gameplay still holds up • Challenging yet addictive • A good helping of extras	• Dated graphics • Might be too hard for some

● ● ● ◐ ○

OPM Rating

PlayStation
WCW/nWo
THUNDER
THQ

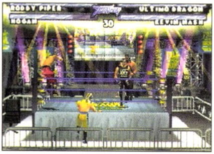
1 or 2 Players

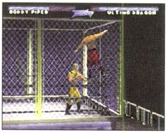
Memory Card 1 block

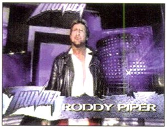
Analog Control Compatible

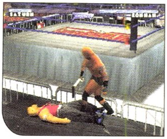
Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Inland Prod.
Publisher	THQ
Genre	Action









In response to fans' requests, each wrestler now includes an FMV entrance clip (right) in addition to the now-standard Rants.

Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Lots of character detail • Cage Match and Battle Royal	• Awful controls • Awful AI • Awful animation • Awful camera

● ○ ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

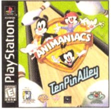
WCW/nWo Thunder

Thunderously bad

OK, so wrestling isn't really a sport. In fact—*spoiler alert!*—it's really an entirely fabricated production that's more soap opera than anything else. But, historically, this most poorly kept secret hasn't made wrestling games any less fun. ...Until now.

See, Thunder is the unfortunate result of all this faction-and-alliance drama that's made wrestling so popular of late; it focuses almost entirely on the characters and misses the fact that wrestling is supposed to be *fun.* In this vein, the wrestlers are reproduced in painstaking detail, with character models that are almost spookily realistic. The game also includes lots of treats for the fan, like the ability to change the 32-plus characters' alliances (WCW, nWo, etc.), humorous character-select Rants, Cage Match and Battle Royal Modes and FMV ring entrances. But the gameplay itself is so horrendous that the only people who will get any enjoyment out of this game are the die-hardest of fans. Movement is sluggish, the camera angles are virtually unuseable, the controls are the definition of unintuitive, and the AI is so bad that I've decided to call it "AS," for Artificial Stupidity. For masochists and hardcore fans only. *—Joe Rybicki*

Developer	Saffire
Publisher	ASC
Genre	Sports



1-8 Players

Memory Card 1-6 blocks

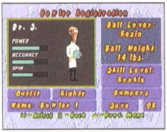
Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley

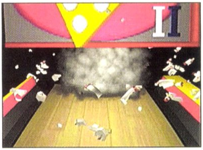
Not much more than a new coat of paint

I was a big fan of the first Ten Pin Alley, but I'm a little disappointed with this one. I'm sure the developers labored over how to make this bowling game substantially better than its predecessor (there's only so many things you can improve in a bowling game), and it seems that in the end they were content to release it with little more than a new coat of paint.

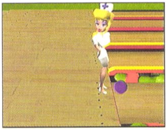
Granted, if you're an Animaniacs fan, it's a compelling coat of paint. The game has just about every character you'd want to see in a bowling alley, and then maybe even some you wouldn't. Each character has his or her own personality, driven by individual animations and sound bites, but even the most avid Animaniacs fan will probably get tired of them after a few games.

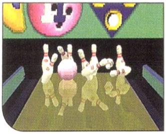
As a bowling game, Ten Pin offers just about anything you could want short of a serious atmosphere. Bowlers can be created from scratch and there are many different ways to use them, ranging from traditional to team play. There's definitely enough here to satisfy any of your pin-hitting urges, but don't bother if you have the first Ten Pin Alley or THQ's more highbrow Brunswick Bowling simulation. *—Kraig Kujawa*





Exploding pins, flattened pins, bouncing balls, bumper bowling—it's all in Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley.





Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Lots of features • Plenty of Animaniacs characters • Easy to learn	• Animations, sound get repetitive • Offers little new over previous game

●●●○○

OPM Rating

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Genre	Fighting

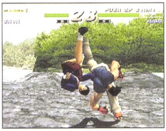
PlayStation
KENSEI
SACRED FIST

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1-6 blocks

"What about now? That better? This always works wonders for my achin' back."

HEINZ
32
YULI



HEINZ
41
YULI

Kensei Sacred Fist

Not packing much punch

Kensei tries taking the best things from other fighting games and incorporating it into a new game, but those borrowed elements turned out to be the only worthwhile aspects. Much worse, they aren't even executed well.

The combo system is heavily inspired by Tekken 3. The look of the combos is right, but the controls and variations aren't done well. You can't alter the order of moves enough, and it's tough trying to pull of specific moves. There's a lag time between your button inputs and the on-screen action, which is death for a precision fighting game. You can't react quickly enough to even the most basic punches and kicks.

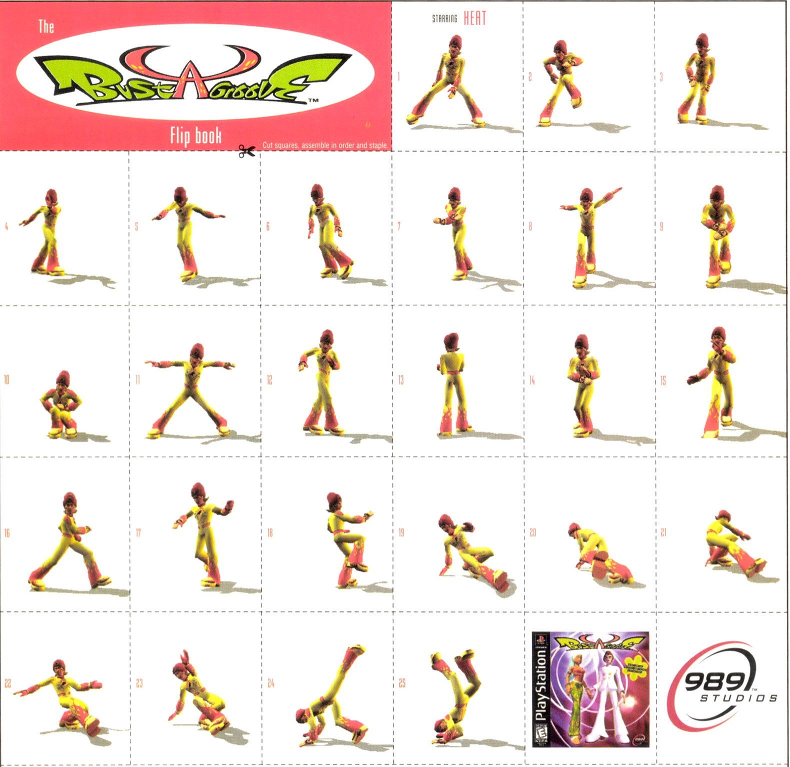
Like Dead or Alive, there is a counterstrike button, which is minimally effective since it's hard to time your defense against an opponent's strike. There are a few saving graces that rescue Kensei from being a total loss. There are many characters to unlock, and the graphics are adequate. It's enjoyable on the level of a mindless fighter, which is great for two-player combat between novice players. Of course, players who would be attracted to this title are likely to be more demanding of a fighter and casual players have better games to choose from. *—Wataru Maruyama*

Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Lots of characters • OK graphics	• Sloppy combo system • Generic characters • Lag time on all moves

●◐○○○

OPM Rating


The
Bust A Groove™
Flip book
STARRING HEAT
1
2
3
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PlayStation
989 STUDIOS

Cut squares, assemble in order and staple.

Funkin' Groovin' Dance Action!

Here's the dilly, yo... It's called Bust A Groove™. The fresh, competitive dance game for a funked-up PlayStation® generation. You control more than 10 club characters as they perform their super realistic dance moves to disco, house and hip-hop beats. So get your body movin' with the game that's got the groove goin' on!

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CHILLIN'!
3 Combo!
KITTY-N
FRIDA

4 Combo!
4 Combo!
HIRO
HEAT

FREEZE!!
3 Combo!
PINKY
KELLY

FREEZE!!
MISS
SHORTY
GAS-O

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FIFA 99

EA scores the Golden Goal

Developer	EA Sports
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Sports

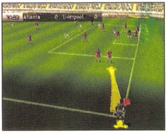
PlayStation
FIFA 99
EA SPORTS
JVC

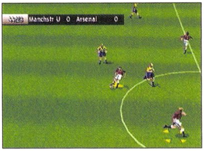
1~8 Players
Memory Card 2 blocks
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

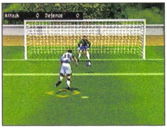
Wow, it's amazing what a difference a year can make. When it comes to quality, the PlayStation versions of the FIFA soccer franchise have been up and down for the past few years. But somehow, EA was finally able to get their act together and put together their best soccer game ever, FIFA 99.

All the things that have consistently marred previous FIFA games, such as shoddy frame-rates and sluggish controls, have been fixed in FIFA 99. And it's been done without any sacrifices in aesthetic quality or gameplay. Clearly, the design team behind FIFA 99 understands what's important in a sports game and knows how to execute it.

While soccer can occasionally feel like a slow and methodical sport, it never seems that way when playing FIFA 99. The intensity and speed of the gameplay is just right, and there's plenty of moves and jukes that adds some razzle-dazzle to the on-field action. The other strengths of this game lie in its in-depth features, extensive licenses and, best of all, its multiplayer modes. FIFA has always been a fun game when you get a group of people together, and with this improved game engine, it's an absolute blast. This is now the soccer game to beat. *—Kraig Kujawa*







Le Havre 0 W Bremen 2

Spend some time practicing various offensive and defensive facets of the game in FIFA's Training Mode (left).

Box Score

Pros
- Great graphics
- Over 250 real soccer teams
- Realistic play
- Excellent soundtrack and commentary

Cons
- Incredibly long load times

● ● ● ● ◐
OPM Rating

Nectaris

Old-school strategy action

Developer	Hudson
Publisher	Jaleco
Genre	Strategy

PlayStation
nectaris
MILITARY MADNESS

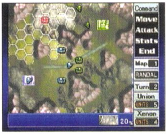
1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block

It seems like ages ago that I sat down with my TurboGrafx 16 system and played one of the best military strategy games ever. Nectaris is back, but the game is almost exactly the same, with only a few twists added. That's not such a bad thing, since it's the simple and easy-to-learn gameplay that won so many strategy gamers over in the first place.

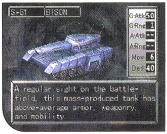
The computer is challenging, although it functions more like an automated chess computer than like smart, reactive AI. This design philosophy is clearly evident in the Campaign Mode, which features prize-winning scenario maps submitted by fans. All are devilish in their design, and they always let the computer capitalize on your mistakes. I found this by far the most interesting addition. For everyone new to the game, what you'll get is a straightforward strategy interface with above-average in-game graphics. What you won't get are lots of game options like creating new units or complex vehicle maneuvers. No super nuke devices or stealing enemy weapons to give you an advantage. In other words, there aren't a lot of variables, which means you have to use your noggin to make do with what you have. This is a must-have for strategy fans, but is great for casual gamers as well. *—Wataru Maruyama*

ROBBIE EXP
A 80 D 43
7 7
BISON EXP
A 420 D 352

Death from above! Like most games, the coolest weapons appear in the later parts.



ROBBIE EXP
A 50 D 27
5 5
BISON EXP
A 500 D 294



A regular sight on the battle-field, this mass-produced tank has above-average armor, weaponry, and mobility

Box Score

Pros
- Challenging
- Lots of missions
- Simple and addictive

Cons
- Graphics are a bit dated
- Too formulaic
- A new story would be nice

● ● ● ● ○
OPM Rating

Developer	Taito
Publisher	Natsume
Genre	Puzzle

PlayStation
BUST-A-MOVE 4
NATSUME

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

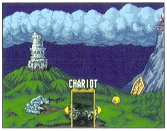
Bust-A-Move 4

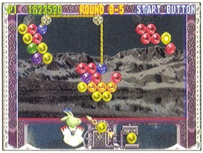
The series' bubble hasn't burst yet

For the past couple of years, the Bust-A-Move series got dangerously close to falling into the trap that lethargic sports franchises often stumble into: A new game comes out every year, but nothing is substantially different with each one.

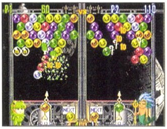
Luckily, this isn't the case with Bust-A-Move 4. Sure, the simple and addicting core gameplay is similar to the other BAMs (line up bubbles of similar color to pop them), but there are tons of new additions that make it play substantially differently. The big changes in this year's game consist of Pulleys that precariously drop and raise groups of bubbles depending on the bubble weight on each end (there's even a tutorial explaining it) and a Combo system that massacres tons of bubbles at once. The Combos are particularly devastating in two-player matches and can be turned off if you wish. Also new are a cute yet superfluous Story Mode that attempts to give some reason for all the bubbly madness, and a full-blown Edit Mode that lets you create puzzles from scratch.

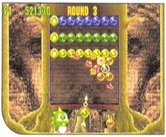
Quite simply, this is the best Bust-A-Move yet. Because of its new modes and gameplay tweaks it is well worth buying, even if you have either (or both) of the previous ones. *—Kraig Kujawa*





A Story Mode half-heartedly gives you a reason to burst lots of bubbles (top left). Pulleys add a new element to gameplay (above).





Box Score

Pros
- Tons of options
- Lots of puzzles and levels
- Nice mix of music
- Multiplayer action is great

Cons
- Too much loading between matches
- Combo system is too easy

● ● ● ● ○
OPM Rating

Developer	Cyclone Studios
Publisher	3DO
Genre	Action

PlayStation
UPRISING X

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

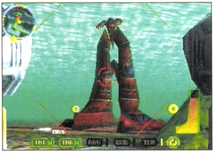
Uprising X

Real-time strategy minus the strategy

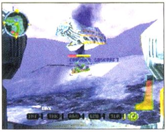
I wish I knew why developers seem to think PlayStation owners prefer dumbed-down versions of PC games. Uprising X is based on a unique 3D real-time strategy game for the PC, but the PlayStation version has much more action—more or less like a souped-up first-person shooter, really—and much less strategy. And it seems to me that the PlayStation needs another good RTS a heck of a lot more than it needs another first-person shooter.

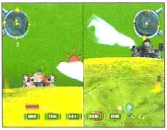
Now, for what it is, Uprising X isn't all that bad. There certainly are elements of strategy; in piloting your Wraith tank across the large 3D battlefields, you'll need to call in specialized units to help with your many objectives. To access these units you'll need to establish a base in true RTS style. But these all serve as support for the basic race-and-shoot gameplay that's clearly the focus of the game. The limited paths of the deceptively open arenas and the laughably brainless enemies make it feel even more like a corridor shooter.

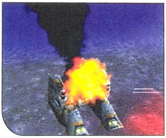
The presentation is nothing special, with ho-hum graphics and sound and absolutely horrible voice-overs. Interesting Two-Player Modes add depth, but overall the game is only slightly above average. *—Joe Rybicki*



The Citadel (above) is your center of operations, where you can construct factories to build and train units.







Box Score

Pros
- Some strategic elements
- Good two-player modes
- Excellent controls (with Dual Shock)

Cons
- Feels too much like a corridor shooter
- Lackluster graphics, sound
- Distractingly bad voice-overs

● ● ● ○ ○
OPM Rating

Heart-stomping, hair-
CORE
PlayStation

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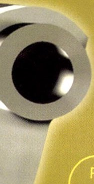
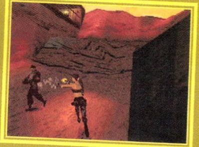
straightening, mind-melting action.

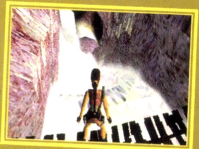
(Ready for level 2?)



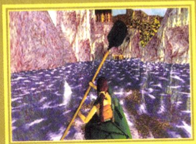
Discover what it takes to send shivers down your soul.



Plough through five continents with extreme prejudice. And a grenade launcher.

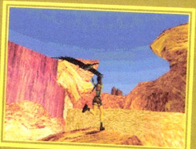


Check your gut in manic, eyeball-blistering action.



Kayak rapids and motorcycle your escape from environments that will lose your mind.

Enjoy international diplomatic immunity with a set of 9mm's as your passport.



Annihilate your way through 15 levels of high-res mercilessness.

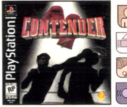
TOMB RAIDER III

ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

EIDOS

INTERACTIVE

Developer	JVC
Publisher	Sony CEA
Genre	Sports



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Contender

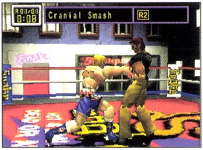
Wins the best boxing game title

If you remember some of the classic and wonderfully entertaining boxing games such as Punch-Out!! and Ring King, then you know the exact type of lighthearted, unrealistic action that the developers of Contender sought to imitate.

For the most part, they were successful. Contender is the exact opposite of Knockout Kings (EA's lumbering yet realistic simulation), and I think that's what most gamers want when it comes to a boxing game these days. The degree of difficulty ramps up at a nice pace, allowing just about anyone to jump into the action. But once you get your boxer into the higher tiers of competition, you can expect more strategic encounters. For example, new punches can be learned as you progress, and the characters you fight against are diverse and interesting enough to make you want to keep punching your way to the next one. After all, what's more compelling than knocking out a Sumo wrestler and then progressing to take on someone who looks like a reject from *Good Times*?

The only problem with Contender is that the polygonal models of the boxers could have looked better. Many of them look like they're built out of balloons, but nevertheless they sure are fun to punch. ***—Kraig Kujawa***

RED CORNER
SHIN FU
FIGHT 21
WIN 18
LOSE 0
DRAW 3
K.O. 9
T.K.O. 3
5'11" 256lbs
RIGHT HAND
LOCAL



Learn fancy new moves with the help of your trainer (above).

Box Score

Pros
- Finally, a fun boxing game!
- Lots of characters
- Can build a boxer and use in two player

Cons
- Boxers look a little strange

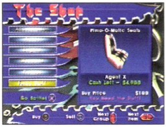
● ● ● ● ○
OPM Rating

Developer	Player 1
Publisher	ASC Games
Genre	Action

PlayStation
DEAD IN THE WATER
E

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

You can upgrade your watercraft with such essentials as fuzzy dice, steering wheel covers and Pimp-O-Matic Seats (right).



Box Score

Pros
- Fun, super-loose physics
- Upgradeable vehicles
- New twist on the genre

Cons
- Cliché story, characters and levels
- Mostly ugly graphics
- Weak artificial intelligence

● ● ◐ ○ ○
OPM Rating

Dead in the Water

Yawn in the water

As if the recent surge in land-based vehicular combat games wasn't enough, along comes Dead in the Water. The formula is simple: Take outrageous characters, high-powered vehicles, nasty weapons and wacky arenas; add water; shake vigorously.

As such, there really isn't much new here. The characters are your basic goofy clichés, the levels are largely uninspired and the story is simply pitiful. ("For years, rumors have circulated regarding a tournament that takes place once a year run by a mysterious organization..." Please.)

Of course, vehicular combat games are generally short on story; the point is the action, and Dead in the Water is enjoyable enough to play that these faults don't hurt it too badly. The gravity-defying physics make this one of the most entertaining water-based engines on the PlayStation.

Unfortunately, the graphics are pretty subpar, with loads of nasty pop-up and grainy, pixelated textures. And the AI is nothing to write home about, making the game not nearly as challenging as it could have been. The ability to use cash pick-ups and prize money to upgrade your vehicle is something that we should have seen long ago in this genre, but the game's pretty short on other innovations. Mainly a rental. ***—Joe Rybicki***

Developer Artech Studios
Publisher Hasbro Int.
Genre Misc.

PlayStation
WHEEL OF FORTUNE

1–3 Players
Memory Card 2 blocks
Vibration Function Compatible

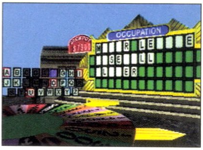
Wheel of Fortune

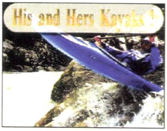
I'd like to buy a host, Vanna

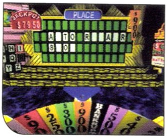
Chances are, you've never been on a TV game show. Chances are, you never will. This being the case, games like Hasbro's Wheel of Fortune are the closest many of us will come to winning fabulous prizes—or slinking away with a mere parting gift. And in the case of Wheel of Fortune, the game may very well be close enough for some.

Every element of the hugely popular TV show is faithfully reproduced, from the clacking of said Wheel (accompanied, of course, by a Dual Shock rumble) to newer additions like the Jackpot Round and that odd $10,000 half-space. There's just one glaring omission: Pat Sajak is inexplicably absent from the game. In his place is an annoyingly chatty Vanna White, noticeably uncomfortable in her new speaking role. With that one exception, the game is just about as close as you can get to being there without actually being there. You can even pass around the controller for a complete three-player game.

The only major fault I found was the time limit for answering questions in the Speed-Up Round; entering the letters individually takes longer than you'd think. Nevertheless, this version is the best Wheel yet. *—Joe Rybicki*







By far one the most amusing features of Wheel of Fortune are the perfectly cheesy "Tell her what she's won, Charlie!" prize details (left).

Box Score

Pros

- Almost entirely faithful to the show
- Loads of different puzzles

Cons

- Where's Pat?!?
- Default answer time is a bit unforgiving

● ● ● ● ○

OPM Rating

Developer Artech Studios
Publisher Hasbro Int.
Genre Misc.

PlayStation
JEOPARDY!

1–3 Players
Memory Card 1–7 blocks
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

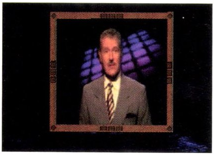
Jeopardy!

Addictive exercise for your brain

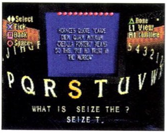
When it comes to challenging game shows, *Jeopardy!* is pretty much in a class by itself. And now you no longer have to risk making a fool of yourself on national TV to play, because Hasbro Interactive has provided the means for Alex Trebek to make you look stupid in the privacy of your own living room.

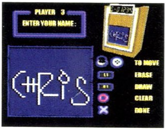
Of course, bringing home a knowledge-intensive game like this isn't the simplest task, and Jeopardy! has its share of flaws. Most painful is a rare glitch whereby certain answers—sorry, *questions*—are judged incorrect even when entered perfectly. Also somewhat frustrating is the fact that on the default AI setting, if you're doing well against the computer your opponents will almost *never* guess incorrectly.

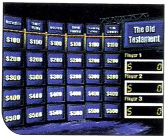
But these are relatively minor problems compared with the game's strengths. Extensive options allow you to specify the strictness of the spelling, the difficulty of computer opponents, and just about anything else you'd want. The categories you've played can also be saved on your memory card to prevent repetition. And the staggering number of categories adds lots of replay value. So even with its flaws, it's an excellent home version and great exercise for your brain. *—Joe Rybicki*



Easily the most flat-out entertaining feature of the game is the ability to write in your own name, art or logo (right).







Box Score

Pros

- Loads of categories
- Lots of options
- Embarrass your friends in multiplay!

Cons

- Frustrating (but rare) answer glitch
- CPU players can seem infallible

● ● ● ● ○

OPM Rating

Review Recap

The final word—official and unbiased

Par 3
Swing 1
Player 1

Rugrats: Search for Reptar

A roundup of the most notable games of recent months

Activision Classics

PlayStation
Activision Classics
A Collection of
30 games
for the Atari 2600
Activision

We know it sounds like a great idea, but like many other retro-nostalgia compilations, Activision Classics simply reveals that the old games just aren't that great. It's worth a rental for the nostalgia trip, but that's about it.

OPM Rating ●●○○○

Brave Fencer Musashi

PlayStation
Brave Fencer
Musashi
Squaresoft

Square ventures out of the cozy turn-based confines of the traditional RPG and ends up with a fine action/RPG, with the emphasis on action. Young Musashi has at his command a wide range of moves that he learns by defeating his enemies. The game can be a bit linear at points, but the good graphics, excellent control, and variety of action, puzzles and minigames make Brave Fencer well worth a look.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Colony Wars: Vengeance

PlayStation
Colony Wars
Vengeance

In seeking to improve on their phenomenal game of space combat, Psygnosis added an entire armada of new ships, lots of new weapons, and even land-based missions complete with giant mechanized robot spidery things. Unfortunately, they turned up the difficulty a notch or three, and the results are frustrating. For patient gamers only.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

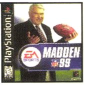
Lucky Luke

PlayStation
Lucky Luke

We aren't quite sure why Infogrames is marketing this Wild West game to children 10 and below. It features frustrating (albeit varied) gameplay, annoying controls and shooting deaths—just like 90 percent of the games out there. Don't bother.

OPM Rating ●●○○○

Madden NFL 99



Simply the deepest, most realistic NFL football game on the PlayStation. No, it may not have the graphical punch of its major competitor, but it's got the stuff where it counts. This excellent pigskin simulation is the ideal choice for the die-hard football fan.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Metal Gear Solid

PlayStation
Metal Gear
Konami

Some have said that this game doesn't live up to its prerelease hype because it's just too short. We say the game is so packed with extras, secrets and "Holy-crap-that's-cool" innovations that the 10 to 15 hour completion time doesn't hurt it enough to matter. The story is wonderfully engrossing, the graphic style is topnotch, and the voice-overs are the best yet. It's our Game of the Year for a reason. You need to own this true classic.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

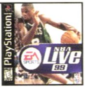
Mortal Kombat 4

PlayStation
Mortal 4 Kombat
Midway

The newest addition to the MK saga is a surprisingly adequate port of a very high-performance arcade game. The inclusion of free-roaming arenas and the ability to pick up weapons add some much-needed innovation to the aging series. Some unresponsive controls mar the experience, as does the frequent disc access. Nevertheless, it's a solid addition for any MK fan.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

NBA Live 99



EA's newest installment in the Live series sports AI improved from the previous version, loads of options and features, and improved graphics that actually show the players' emotions through an almost creepy use of facial expressions. The frame-rate could use some work, though. Also, as of this writing the NBA lockout is still in full effect, so if the season ever does get under way there will be a ton of roster changes that will need to be made. Still, it's one of the best b-ball games yet.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

NCAA Football 99

PlayStation
EA Sports
NCAA Football 99

A development team all its own has made NCAA 99 one hell of a college football game. Excellently challenging AI, loads of options and great polygonal graphics make this one a winner on all counts. And although the frame-rate could use a boost, EA's 32-bit football games have always been about realism over action. Nice job!

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

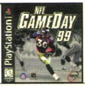
NFL Blitz

PlayStation
NFL Blitz
Midway

"Oh, that HAD to hurt!" To everyone's surprise, the console version actually more than does justice to Midway's arcade hit. Throw in Dual Shock support and Tournament and Season Modes and you've got one excellent port on your hands. Fast, addictive, brutal and just plain fun.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

NFL GameDay 99



Still fighting head to head with Madden, GameDay takes the looser, more arcade-style route to gridiron glory. Crisper graphics,

recap pick of the month

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

PlayStation
Crash Bandicoot Warped

The third time's the charm for Naughty Dog's immensely popular marsupial. While the first game enjoyed a great deal of mainstream success, we the hypersensitive critics pointed out a frustrating number of flaws, including the irritating save system, the failure to compensate for the 3D environment, and other weaknesses that the game's phenomenal graphics often overshadowed. The second game addressed some of these issues but failed to make enough of an improvement over the first to make much of a difference.

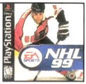
Now, the latest game has it all thanks to the addition of some much-needed variety in the form of widely different areas and gameplay mechanics. Players can now pilot jet ski-style watercraft, biplanes, submarine scooters and motorcycles through some of the most beautiful environments seen on any system. An excellent game for all ages.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

more detailed polygonal models and more thorough player animations are just the visual updates; the AI has been tweaked as well, albeit not as much as one would hope. Still one of the best football games available.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

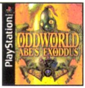
NHL 99



In an unfortunate example of why you shouldn't try to fix something that ain't broken, EA makes some changes to their stunning NHL 98 engine and ends up with a slower, choppier game than last year's version. The inclusion of some new coaching strategies, a shot power meter and the Coaching Drill Mode almost compensates for its flaws—but not quite. Last year's is still better.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus



The loveable Abe returns in what amounts to little more than a collection of new levels to add to the excellent Abe's Oddysee. Further variety in environments helps differentiate between the games, however, as does the ability to possess more creatures, the increased Gamespeak vocabulary and the vector of Mudokon emotions. The much-needed Quiksave eliminates the pesky checkpoints of the previous game. An all-around topnotch title.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Parasite Eve

Square's "cinematic RPG" may be light on puzzles, but it's heavy on moody environments and seriously twisted cinemas. That's not even mentioning the topnotch sci-fi/horror story. A nifty weapon and attribute modification system offers about the only real mental challenge, but who cares?

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Rogue Trip

SingleTrac proves that they can do vehicle combat even without the SCEA-owned Twisted Metal license. Fast action, good controls and a new gameplay element in the form of the Tourist make up for some unimaginative level design and lots of graphical gaffes.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Rugrats: Search for Reptar

This is a kids' game truly designed for no one but kids. The little tykes will enjoy the familiar characters, colorful environments and simple game objectives. They're most likely to enjoy the "Activities" like Mini-Golf and Egg Hunt more than the "real" game, though, due to the touchy controls.

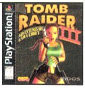
OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Spyro the Dragon

He's cute, he's cuddly and he breathes fire. He's Spyro the Dragon, featured in this innovative platformer with a star-studded cast. Restrained level design makes the sheer size of the game even more impressive, and yet it's not too much of a challenge for the beginner. First rate!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

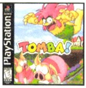
Tomb Raider III



It's frustrating that two full years after the original title this game still looks and plays fundamentally the same. What was revolutionary back then is getting a bit tired. Still, this episode features the most realistic levels yet, most notably the city levels (light years ahead of the Venice levels of the previous game). But the controls are irritating, the levels are *very* unbalanced, and the game is loaded with bugs. Patience will pay off with this game, but you'll need a lot of it.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Tomba!



The platform veterans at Whoopee Camp have come up with an entertaining and surprisingly deep, platform-based adventure that in some places could even be called an RPG. More than 130 miniquests are carried out in a huge, colorful, polygonal world populated with dozens of wacky characters. Whimsical fun for the whole family.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Twisted Metal III

Without SingleTrac behind the wheel of this beloved franchise, the game is far less imaginative than the previous versions. If you can't stand being without the familiar characters, this is for you. Otherwise, try V8 or Rogue Trip.

OPM Rating ●●◐○○

Vigilante 8

This game of vehicular combat takes the formula set forth by Twisted Metal and runs with it. Gigantic, realistic environments are the arenas, funky '70s characters are your enemies, and your vehicles range from a school bus to a (hidden) alien spacecraft. The powerful engine even allows huge craters to be blown in the ground. It's a blast!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Xenogears

Square proves they still got it with an immense RPG with an entirely unique engine and loads of other innovations. A great story, a necessity for any good RPG, is complemented by great graphics. A worthwhile experience for any RPG-er!

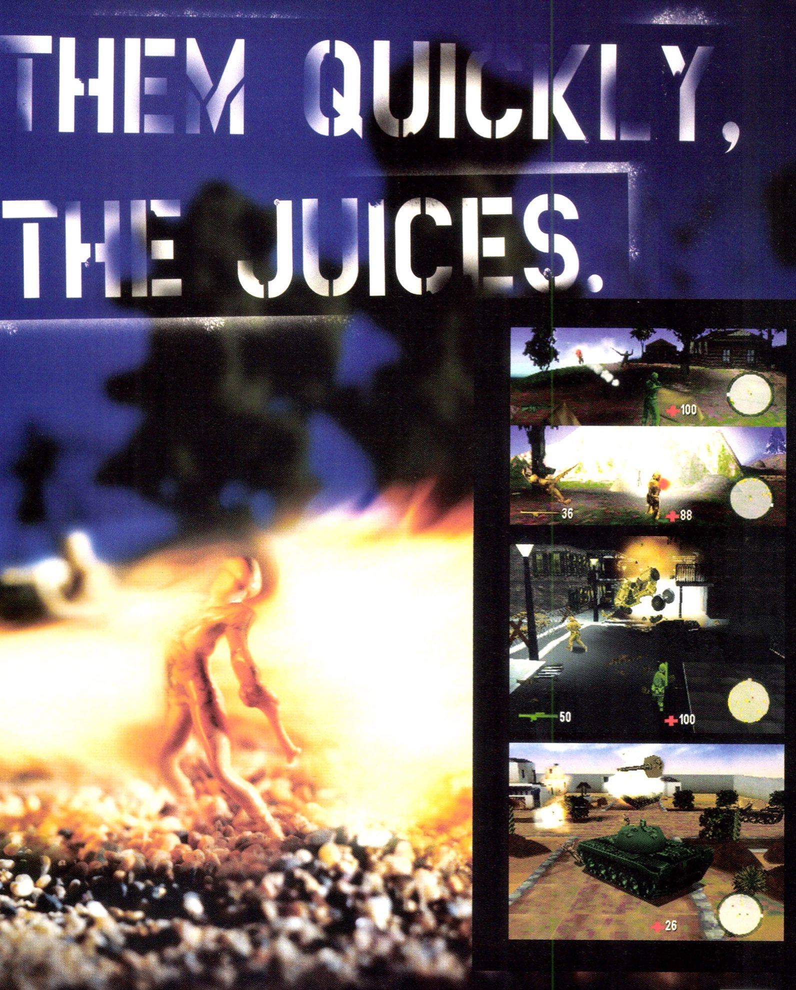
OPM Rating ●●●●○

Ratings at a Glance

Ace Combat 2	●●●●●
AGH: Atari Coll. 2	●●◐○○
Batman & Robin	●○○○○
Blasto	●●●◐○
Breath of Fire III	●●●◐○
C: Contra Adventure	●◐○○○
Castlevania: SotN	●●●●●
Colony Wars	●●●●●
Crash Bandicoot 2	●●●●○
Dead or Alive	●●●●◐
Final Fantasy VII	●●●●●
Forsaken	●●●●○
G.Darius	●●●●○
Gex: Enter the Gecko	●●●◐○
Gran Turismo	●●●●●
Heart of Darkness	●●●●○
Hot Shots Golf	●●●●○
Judge Dredd	●◐○○○
Kartia	●●●●○
The Lost World: JP	●○○○○
Micro Machines	●●●●●
MLB 99	●●●●○
NBA Live 98	●●●●◐
NBA ShootOut 98	●●●◐○
Need For Speed III	●●●●○
NFL Xtreme	●●○○○
One	●●●●○
OW: Abe's Oddysee	●●●●○
PaRappa the Rapper	●●●●●
Pitfall 3D	●●○○○
Point Blank	●●●◐○
Resident Evil 2 (DS)	●●●●●
Road Rash 3D	●●●○○
SaGa Frontier	●●●◐○
San Francisco Rush	●●●○○
Soul Blade	●●●●◐
Tales of Destiny	●●●●○
Tekken 3	●●●●●
Test Drive 4	●●●◐○
Tomb Raider	●●●●○
Tomb Raider II	●●●●◐
Triple Play 99	●●◐○○

BY COOKING
YOU SEAL IN
ARMY MEN™ 3D
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.™

THEM QUICKLY,
THE JUICES.



PlayStation®

Exclusively on the PlayStation® game console, from 3DO™ www.3do.com

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RATING PENDING
RP
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

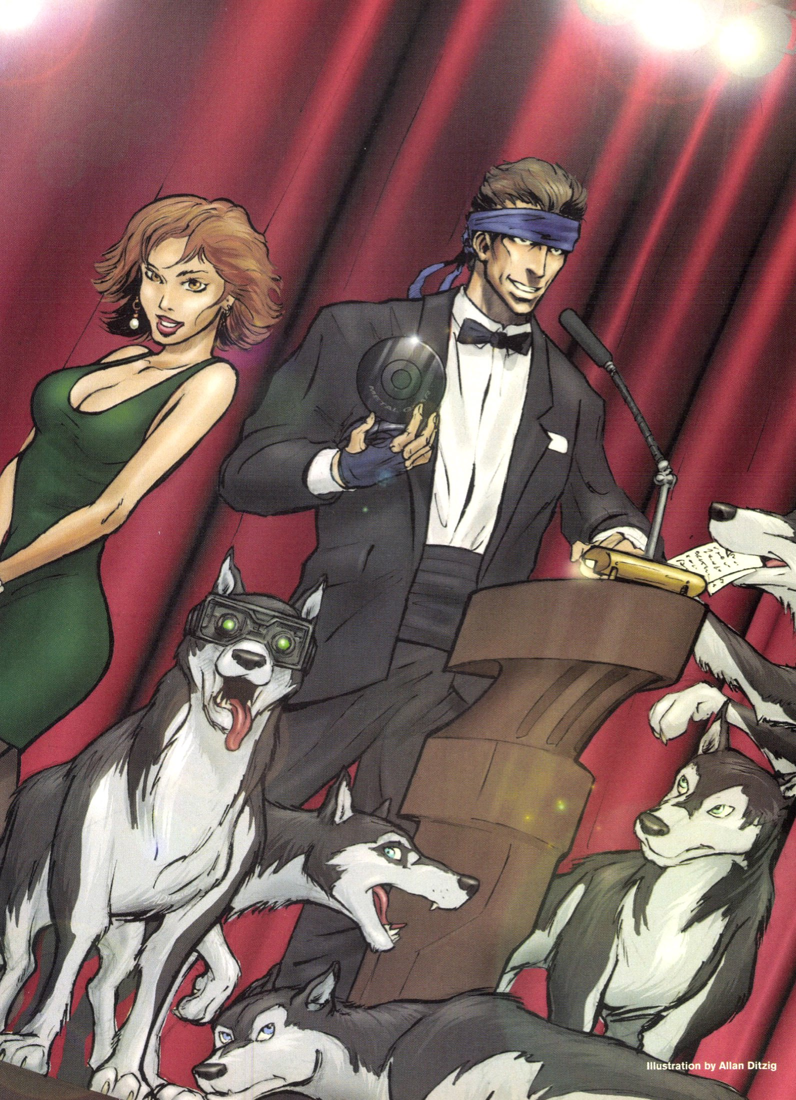


Illustration by Allan Ditzig

1998 OPM editors' awards

It seems like every year is a good year for the PlayStation, and in reality, it is—just look at the numbers. But 1998 seemed a little more special than most. Last year, just about every game developer knew their way around the PlayStation, and as a result we were treated to some of the most innovative games ever seen on a console system.

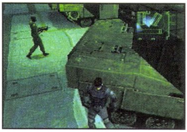
Critics may complain about the endless sea of sequels, but for every sequel that was released there was an original game right alongside it. And who said sequels are necessarily bad things? It's only the bad ones that are.

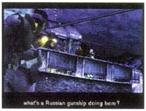
In 1998 the PlayStation's game library was finally complete. Less popular sports like boxing, golf and bowling finally received a few good simulations to represent them, while Einhander and G.Darius brought some topnotch shooters to the platform. Even the youngins could find a few more games to play thanks to the fresh deluge of kid titles that included Rugrats, A Bug's Life and Lucky Luke.

While 1998 was a great year, we're confident things will get even better. Peripherals like the PocketStation will open up new avenues of game design, and we already have something to look forward to in the near future thanks to Ridge Racer 4 and Final Fantasy VIII. There's no doubt that 1999 will be a better year than 1998 was for the PlayStation. The only question is how much better.

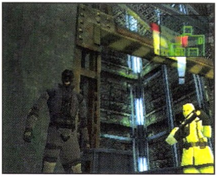
BEST GAME OF '98 METAL GEAR SOLID

RUNNERS UP: Resident Evil 2, Gran Turismo, Tekken 3





Surprised? OK, probably not. Not because we gave Metal Gear Solid our highest rating of five CDs, not because you've been hearing nothing but praise about this game for over a year now, not because anyone else has told you this game is something you must play to believe, but more than likely because you already have played it yourself. You already know all the cool moves you can do—breaking necks, sneaking around under cardboard boxes, flipping guards over railings. Already seen all the incredible weapons, intense Boss encounters, and breathtaking levels. Already heard Snake's raspy voice arguing with the Colonel, or suffered Liquid Snake's tauntings.



It didn't take us long to decide this one, and judging from the poll we ran (where votes for Metal Gear as best PlayStation game of the year more than doubled second-place Resident Evil 2, see page 28 for the results), you agree that no other game this past year topped the total experience that Konami delivered with this game. Cinematic, intense, exciting, funny, unique—there's almost no compliment you can give a game that doesn't apply to Metal Gear. An instant classic that will be remembered for some time to come.

(Got a computer? Check out www.videogames.com's *OPM* page to hear Solid Snake personally accept the *OPM* editors' award for best game of the year!)

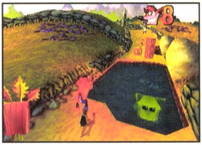
ACCEPTED BY HIDEO KOJIMA, DIRECTOR

I WAS BORN IN JAPAN, BUT GREW UP IN TOUCH WITH THE WESTERN CULTURE–ESPECIALLY AMERICAN TV SHOWS, MOVIES AND LITERATURE. METAL GEAR WAS CREATED BY SUCH A PERSON, AND THE HAPPINESS I AM EXPERIENCING FROM THE FACT THAT IT IS VERY WELL ACCEPTED IN THE U.S. IS TOO GREAT TO BE EXPRESSED IN WORDS. I AM REALLY HAPPY, AND I AM GLAD I CREATED METAL GEAR SOLID. THANK YOU.

BEST ACTION GAME CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED!

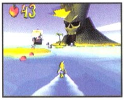
RUNNERS UP: Tomba!, Point Blank, Einhander

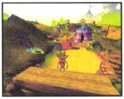
When you think of an action game, chances are the first thing that comes to mind is some form of shooting-busting-killing-exploding game like Einhander or Contra. But we often forget that platformers are action games, too (or at least they're supposed to be).



ACCEPTED BY SCEA

IN JUST TWO YEARS, CRASH BANDICOOT HAS BECOME NOTHING SHORT OF A CULTURAL ICON WORLDWIDE WITH THREE IMPRESSIVE TITLES TO ITS CREDIT. CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED!, THE LATEST TITLE, IS REALLY THE RESULT OF ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE INDUSTRY BETWEEN NAUGHTY DOG, UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE STUDIOS AND SCEA. WE ACCEPT THIS AWARD ON BEHALF OF THIS PARTNERSHIP.





This year we were determined to consider *all* types of action games. Thankfully, Crash 3 made this an easy task, because it really has grown into so much more than a platformer.

Whatever the classification, Crash is an action game at heart, and no other action game from last year has proved so hopelessly endearing to even the most jaded gamer. The hugely diverse gameplay and scalable level of challenge make it a game with a universal appeal approaching classics like Tetris or Pac-Man. It truly is a masterpiece of design.

BEST SPORTS GAME HOT SHOTS GOLF

RUNNERS UP: Madden NFL 99, NFL GameDay 99, NFL Blitz

1
PAR4
413y
TAKU ±0
REST 36y
6
SW
67y
7.73y
98-100

1
PAR4
413y
MARY ±0
REST 425y
1
1W
216y
38.46y
99-100

It surprised us almost as much as it probably surprised you to find that the best sports title of the year wasn't a football simulation or an action-packed basketball game, but rather a golf game. Believe us, Hot Shots Golf deserves it.

The most brilliant aspect of Sony's golf game is that it transforms a traditionally stuffy sport that normally appeals only to a niche audience into an addictively fun experience that just about anyone can jump right into and be at least moderately competitive.

It's a difficult game design task to accomplish, and something that most golf games strive to do but rarely succeed. In fact, it hadn't happened on the PlayStation until this game was released. Hot Shots Golf achieves this feat by offering intuitive controls, personable characters, and challenging (but not frustrating) gameplay. The best component, however, is its impressive multiplayer play that even allows you to taunt fellow players as they square off to swing at the ball. How can you argue with a game that mixes driving wedges and trash talking? And believe it or not, it passes pretty well as a golf simulation, too.

ACCEPTED BY SCEA

ON BEHALF OF SCEA, WE ARE PLEASED AND EXTREMELY ENCOURAGED TO ACCEPT THE AWARD FOR BEST SPORTS GAME. HOT SHOTS GOLF SURPRISED EVERYONE BY BECOMING THE SLEEPER HIT OF THE YEAR. IT'S A GAME THAT SPORTS FANS AND NON-SPORTS FANS ALIKE FELL IN LOVE WITH. WE ATTRIBUTE MUCH OF THE PLAYSTATION'S SUCCESS TO ITS DOMINANCE IN SPORTS GAMING.

1
PAR4
413y
TAKU ±0
REST 20ft
7
PT
30ft
95-100

2
PAR5
452y
TAKU +4
REST 6ft
PT
30ft
95-100

SONY
SELECT
START
ANALOG

BEST PERIPHERAL DUAL SHOCK

We at *OPM* see an obscene amount of controllers come across our desks, and most of them claim refinements and improvements that are supposedly better than Sony's Dual Shock. Sure, some feature here or there might be better, but nothing beats the revolutionary Dual Shock as an overall package. As you probably already know, dual analog sticks and force feedback are included in this work of art, and don't forget its budget-friendly price. Perhaps the best thing about the Dual Shock is that just about every recent PlayStation game uses all of its features. To sum up, every PlayStation owner should have a Dual Shock—without it, you're missing out on a cheap way to enhance a whole lot of games.

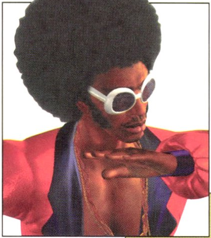
BEST FIGHTING GAME Tekken 3

RUNNERS UP: Dead or Alive, DarkStalkers 3

Honoring Tekken 3 as the best fighting game on the PlayStation in 1998 was one of the easiest decisions in the world for us to make. Easily grasped by novices and hardcore fanatics alike, the intuitive fighting controls in this game appeal to just about everyone.

The amazing thing is that Tekken 3 accomplishes this without leaving hardcore fighting game fans in the cold.

38
EDDY
JIN
WIN 1



Namco deepened Tekken's combo system, balanced moves, and tweaked the character reaction timing to create a balanced game.

As if that weren't enough, the 3D graphics are some of the best seen on the PlayStation, especially the beautifully fluent animations. Namco gets extra credit for making each installment incrementally better than the previous edition. Much of this was accomplished through extra efforts like including great bonuses such as Ball and Force Modes, hidden characters, and other goodies that continue to set standards for what a home conversion should deliver.

There were a lot of good fighting games on the PlayStation, but none of them came close to the excellence exhibited by this one.

STAGE 2
36
FREE PLAY
HWOARANG
PAUL

ACCEPTED BY MIKE FISCHER, NAMCO DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

I'D LIKE TO THANK THE TEKKEN 3 TEAM LEADER, MR. NAKATANI, AND HIS GREAT TEAM AT NAMCO LTD., AS WELL AS OUR EXCELLENT LOCALIZATION CREW HERE AT NAMCO HOMETEK. WE ARE THRILLED THAT AFTER THREE VERSIONS, TEKKEN IS STILL THE FLAGSHIP FIGHTING GAME FOR THE PLAYSTATION.

BEST ADVENTURE GAME Metal Gear Solid

RUNNERS UP: Parasite Eve, Resident Evil 2, Tenchu

Now this one was tough. All the nominees are great adventure games, but it was especially difficult to choose between Metal Gear and Resident Evil 2. That's like having to decide between chocolate and peanut butter—you don't want just one 'cause you love 'em both! But we are professionals, after all, and in the end it's for making these kind of heart-wrenching decisions that they pay us the big bucks (OK, well, we get free phone calls at least), so we took a deep breath and all came to the same conclusion: If we have to pick just one, it's got to be Metal Gear Solid.

Both games have extraordinary graphics, sound, story and gameplay, but MGS edged out RE2 by its sheer originality. There just isn't another game like it, whereas RE2 is basically an improved version of the first game—very improved, we might add—and the first was damn good already. See how hard this was?!?

ACCEPTED BY HIDEO KOJIMA

IN METAL GEAR SOLID, INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON VISUAL QUALITY AND SMALL DETAILS, I CONCENTRATED ON CREATING AN ORIGINAL WORLD IN THE COMPUTER. A WORLD IN WHICH ONE CAN WALK AROUND, A WORLD AT WHICH ONE CAN LOOK AROUND AND EXPERIENCE FROM ALL ANGLES EVEN IF THE NUMBER OF POLYGONS USED IS NOT LARGE—THAT'S THE KIND OF WORLD I AIMED FOR.

THE REST OF '98

BEST KID GAME:
RUGRATS
We had the third-graders at Briar Glen School in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, handle this category for us and they unanimously chose Tommy, Chucky and the gang over the competition. They felt that it was easier to pick up and play–a testament to the game's intuitiveness and great license. Who are we to argue?

BEST USE OF AREA 51:
TOMB RAIDER III
When we talked to the developers from Core, they revealed that Area 51 was one of their favorite levels in TR3, and it's obvious why. This futuristic backdrop looked great and gave Lara an entirely new environment to navigate.

WORST USE OF AREA 51:
TWISTED METAL III
Oooh, it's a little roundish arena with metal walls, and... well...that's pretty much it. Yawn. Well, there is the door leading to Hangar 18–except, last we checked, Hangar 18 was in the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio–2,000 miles away from Area 51.

MOST REALISTIC SPORTS GAME:
MADDEN NFL 99
With all of its subtleties and strategies, football is probably the hardest sport to realistically emulate. Madden NFL 99 does the best job of handling those X's and O's–a testament to the developers, not John Madden.

MOST UNREALISTIC SPORTS GAME:
NFL BLITZ
Yep. And we love every bit.

BEST BLITZ RIP-OFF:
NFL XTREME
This is like NFL Blitz with a bad frame-rate and all the fun removed. 989 Studios can do real sports, but not "extreme" ones.

WORST RETRO GAME:
PITFALL 3-D
Talk about a clean sweep. Activision has the dubious honor of winning both the

THE REST OF '98 (CONT.)

best and the worst retro game award. Hopefully they'll learn from this unique situation. Pitfall 3-D had little in common with its predecessor, but ironically, its only saving grace is that the original Pitfall is hidden within the game.

GAME THAT MOST DESERVED TO DIE: THRILL KILL

Even though hordes of netizens cried foul when EA pulled the plug on this ridiculously grotesque fighting game, they neglect to realize that they were actually done a favor.

TOUGHEST GAME TO BEAT: COLONY WARS: VENGEANCE

The only vengeance here seems to be the developers getting back the gamers who try to finish this game. Long, unforgivable missions and a lame save-game system made this one an exercise in pure frustration.

WORST USE OF A MOVIE LICENSE: SMALL SOLDIERS

Perhaps this would be better titled Least Use of a Movie License. "I know, let's make a movie-based game that has next to nothing to do with the movie, so we can be sure to avoid any of the things that made the movie even remotely interesting!" Er...why?

MOST FAITHFUL USE OF A MOVIE LICENSE: BATMAN AND ROBIN

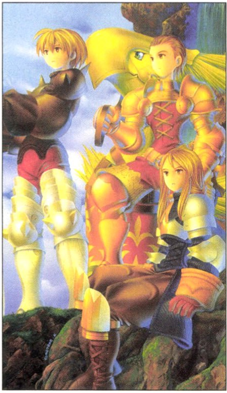
Hey, the game was every bit as awful as the film. That's good licensing!

WORST CHARACTER 'WITH AN ATTITUDE': PUNKY SKUNK

Despite the desperate pleas on the back of the box that Mr. Skunk "ain't your typical mascot 'with an attitude,'" we aren't buying it. Just look at the obnoxious neon orange and pink stripes all over the game. Consider his oh-so-marketable little face. Witness his penchant for "extreme" sports. And that name...call it whatever you like, but Punky is gonna burn in hell right alongside Bubsy and others of their ilk.

BEST STRATEGY FINAL FANTASY TACTICS

RUNNERS UP: C&C Red Alert: Retaliation, Kartia, Risk



Sure there were other quality strategy games this year, but choosing the winner for this award was easy. You pick a category to judge a strategy game by and Final Fantasy Tactics is the clear winner (well, except maybe for its incredibly complicated story—we're still trying to figure it out).

Challenging enough to really force you to think (all too rare even in a genre expressly designed for that purpose), with excellent play mechanics, intriguing battle scenarios, a wide range of characters and great looks and sound (it was also nominated for best sound), Tactics is so huge and so deep you can finish it and still feel like you've never seen the bottom.

ACCEPTED BY YASUMI MATSUNO, DIRECTOR

ON BEHALF OF SQUARE SOFT AND EVERYONE WHO WORKED SO HARD ON FINAL FANTASY TACTICS, I AM PLEASED TO ACCEPT THIS AWARD. I'VE CREATED AND DEVELOPED GAMES BASED ON INFLUENCES FROM THE U.S., SO KNOWING THAT THIS PARTICULAR JAPANESE STRATEGY GAME HAS BEEN ACCEPTED SO WELL BY THE U.S. AUDIENCE IS EXCITING, AND I TAKE PRIDE IN RECEIVING SUCH A PRESTIGIOUS AWARD. I HOPE TO CONTINUE CREATING GAMES OF THIS CALIBER AND HOPE TO CONTINUE TO PLEASE FANS IN THE FUTURE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

BEST RPG XENOGEARS

RUNNERS UP: Alundra, Tales of Destiny, Brave Fencer Musashi

Be careful, land dweller.
You'll have a terrible time
if you open up your heart
to those old men.

It's been a pretty good year for RPGs in general, especially for so-called slash-RPGs (action/RPGs, strategy/RPGs, etc.), but it wasn't until the end of the year that a clear best RPG appeared in the form of Square's Xenogears.

Sure it has good graphics, an excellent combat system, a good level of difficulty and a huge quest, but what really makes Xenogears something special is its story. Without turning this into the column for the award for best story (which was also won by Xenogears, by the way), Square created a fantastic but very believable world populated with complex, interesting people and their struggles and plopped you right into it. A very adult story, but a great example that you don't have to make games expressly for kids for them to be able to be enjoyed by people of all ages.

ACCEPTED BY HIROMICHI TANAKA, PRODUCER

ON BEHALF OF SQUARE SOFT AND IN PARTICULAR THE ENTIRE XENOGEARS DEVELOPMENT TEAM, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE *OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE* FOR THE HONOR OF BEST RPG OF THE YEAR. MY HOPE FOR XENOGEARS IS FOR AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE TO PLAY THE GAME, EXPERIENCE THE ENDING AND BE ABLE TO GAIN SOMETHING FROM THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE.

STAGE 1 00'11"86
35
PUSH P2 START
PANDA
PAUL

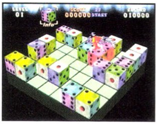
BEST ARCADE CONVERSION Tekken 3

RUNNERS UP: NFL Blitz, MK4, Point Blank, DarkStalkers 3

The original Tekken was one of the first titles to take advantage of the PlayStation arcade hardware, which resulted in perfect home conversions. Tekken 3, on the other hand, was developed on a slightly revamped model of that architecture, which meant that an absolutely perfect translation was impossible. Even with those odds, Namco managed to produce a version of the fighter on the PlayStation that's almost indistinguishable from its coin-op counterpart unless the two are viewed side by side. Tekken 3's gameplay is so great that its incredible achievement in PlayStation graphics is often overlooked. We haven't forgotten.

BEST PUZZLE GAME Devil Dice

RUNNERS UP: Mr. Domino, Roll Away, Bust-A-Move 4



STAGE 007
Info
STEP 3

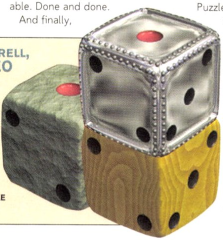
When you consider what makes a truly great puzzle game, you end up with a few constants that no classic puzzler can be without: First, the game must be easy enough to learn that nearly anyone can play. While the rules of Devil Dice may not be completely apparent at first glance, they take almost no time to pick up. Done.

Second, the game must have a carefully ramped degree of challenge, so that each new level provides additional challenge without introducing frustration. Devil Dice's gazillion-level Puzzle Mode adroitly introduces new gameplay elements just as the player masters the previous ones, and its infinite-progression Exhibition multiplayer modes keep speeding up the pace just as the players get comfortable. Done and done.

And finally, the game must be equally enjoyable both as a single-player and a multiplayer game. The introduction of a two-player mode in Tetris ensured the necessity of this criterion, and games like Puzzle Fighter and Bust-A-Move have hammered it home. And this is what gave Devil Dice the edge over top contender Roll Away (formerly known as Kula World), which featured a novel, but weak, two-player "copycat" mode. The frenzy of both the cooperative and competitive modes makes Devil Dice a more well-rounded game overall.

ACCEPTED BY BRIAN FARRELL, THQ PRESIDENT AND CEO

ON BEHALF OF XI, SCEI AND THQ, WE ARE THRILLED TO ACCEPT THIS DISTINGUISHED AWARD. THE CONTINUED RECOGNITION THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED FOR DEVIL DICE IS A TESTAMENT TO THE QUALITY OF THE GAME. THE UNLIMITED REPLAYABILITY, BRAIN-TWISTING PUZZLES, AND HIGHLY ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY MAKE IT THE ULTIMATE PUZZLE GAME.



BEST RACING GAME: Gran Turismo

RUNNERS UP: Need For Speed III: Hot Pursuit, Moto Racer 2

Gran Turismo is racer of the year simply because no other racer has worked so hard to earn our utmost respect and admiration. The game's biggest contribution to the racing genre is the overall consistency it keeps to an aesthetic that is both believable and realistic. No shortcuts were taken when Sony designed the most ambitious driving simulation ever created for a home system.

By bolstering an awesome 150 car roster culled from10 car manufacturers, Gran Turismo is peerless when it comes to sheer numbers. Everything from car performance and specifications to visual appearance and engine sounds is painstakingly modeled so that no two rides ever feel the same. Underneath all this frosting is a physics system that is at once easy to learn and difficult to master. Significant differences between the four drive-train mechanisms are accurately reproduced so that players may need to master each style in order to stay ahead of the pack.

Gran Turismo also includes a hidden 60-frames-per-second mode that pushes the game's graphics to new levels of immersion. For replay value, look no further than the Simulation Mode, which is designed for racing buffs to compete, collect, modify and sell vehicles as they would in a perfect world.

Suffice to say, it will be difficult for any racing game to have the kind of impact Gran Turismo has rightfully achieved.

ACCEPTED BY SCEA

THE RELEASE OF GRAN TURISMO REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE FOR THE PLAYSTATION. WE ACCEPT THIS AWARD FOR ONE OF OUR LEADING DEVELOPMENT TEAMS FROM SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT INC., POLYPHONY DIGITAL, FOR THEIR EXCELLENCE IN CONTINUING TO REDEFINE EXISTING GAME GENRES AND PUSH THE PLAYSTATION HARDWARE CAPACITY.

MITSUBISHI
NISMO
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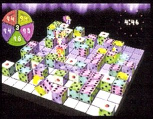
BEST MULTIPLAYER GAME

DEVIL DICE

RUNNERS UP: Diablo, NFL Blitz, Hot Shots Golf, Jeopardy!



As mentioned in the Puzzle Game category, Devil Dice's multiplayer mode is a nonstop marvel of either competition or cooperation. This ensures it a spot as Multiplayer Game of the Year based on its variety of multiplayer modes as well as its sheer enjoyment factor.

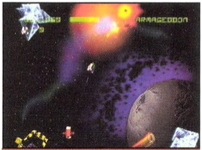
The game includes three separate and distinct multiplayer modes, each as enjoyable as the last. The friendliest mode allows for endless cooperative play for two players; you work together to clear large chunks of dice before the board is completely filled in. This requires either plenty of communication or a talent in telepathy (perhaps both), as it's possible for your partner to wander away with a die you were counting on to complete a set.

The second mode pits one player against the other in a battle to complete four different sets of dice. This isn't as easy as it sounds, considering that there are only six different possible sets, and whenever your opponent completes a set identical to yours, you'll need to build it again to earn back the credit.

The final possibility is five-player pandemonium, where each player competes to rack up the highest number of completion points, which draws points away from the competitors. Such a wide range of options ensures multiplayer goodness for all.

ACCEPTED BY BRIAN FARRELL, THQ PRESIDENT AND CEO

WE CONSIDER IT A PRIVILEGE TO BE ACCEPTING THIS AWARD. IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE WORKING WITH XI IN CONJUNCTION WITH SCEI ON A GAME THAT BOASTS SUCH HIGH CRITICAL ACCLAIM. FROM THE ONSET, WE CONSIDERED DEVIL DICE TO BE THE MULTI-PLAYER CHAMPION OF THE PUZZLE GENRE.



BEST RETRO GAME

ASTEROIDS

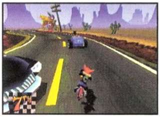
RUNNERS UP: Arcade's Greatest Hits: Atari Collection 2, Street Fighter Collection 2

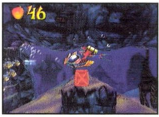
Retro games are all the rage, but all too often, companies don't honor the gameplay that made the classic game so popular or don't flesh out game compilations the way they should have. Activision chose the path that we feel all companies updating a classic should do. They took the fundamental game principles of Asteroids and then updated them to the next obvious progression. They resisted the temptation to bring Asteroids into a completely 3D world, and instead kept its familiar 2D surroundings while giving it some eye-catching polygonal graphics. While Asteroids isn't amazing, it is the best update of a classic in 1998.

BEST GRAPHICS

CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED!

RUNNERS UP: Metal Gear Solid, Resident Evil 2, Einhander





This award process has been all about difficult choices, and the Best Graphics category was one of the most difficult. While we had to give props to both Einhander and RE2, the real battle was between MGS and Crash 3. On the one hand, you have an artful, unusual graphic style that manages to draw an innovative presentation from what might be termed "currently existing technology." On the other, you have a game that comes up with entirely new ways to wring jaw-dropping graphical feats from the hardware—the kind of feats that developers swore could never be done on the PlayStation, and if you don't believe it just take a look at the jetbike levels—but as such is more beautiful in the technical sense than in the artistic.

In the end, we had to go with the game that did for the PlayStation's graphics hardware what MGS did for the Dual Shock: Crash once again takes everyone's perceptions of the system's graphic capabilities and sets them on their collective ear. There's just no arguing with that.

ACCEPTED BY SCEA

CRASH IS NOT ONLY AN OUTSTANDING GAME, BUT ONE THAT WELL DEMONSTRATES THE GRAPHICS POWER OF THE PLAYSTATION. WE ARE GLAD TO ACCEPT THIS AWARD ON BEHALF OF THIS PARTNERSHIP BUT WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE DEVELOPMENT GENIUSES BEHIND THIS FRANCHISE FROM THE HARD-WORKING FOLKS AT NAUGHTY DOG AND UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE STUDIOS.

BEST STORY Xenogears

RUNNERS UP: Metal Gear Solid, Colony Wars: Vengeance, Resident Evil 2

Fei
"Huff, huff...
That's o

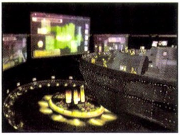
Nabokov's *Lolita*. Twain's *Tom Sawyer*. Joyce's *Ulysses*. Square's Xenogears.

It seems that some of our most interesting literary works have also been our most controversial. And while Xenogears may not be high art, this epic role-playing game certainly raised eyebrows both here and in Japan. Indeed, Square almost didn't bring this game stateside due to controversy over its religious themes.

Xenogears explores the role, and abuses, of organized religion, and even tackles the question of whether man can overpower God. The story mixes sci-fi and fantasy themes, highlighting the destructive powers of both technology and faith. But Xenogears is also the story of an individual in search of his identity, scared of the awesome power that lies within him.

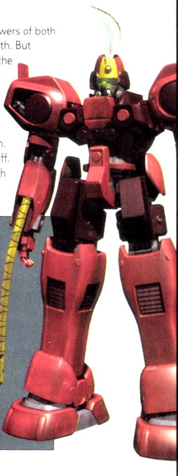
Wow. Heady stuff.

But it all comes together in a rich and rewarding story—and one that's sure to linger with you.



ACCEPTED BY HIROMICHI TANAKA, PRODUCER

ON BEHALF THE ENTIRE XENOGEARS DEVELOPMENT TEAM, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR AWARDING XENOGEARS THE HONOR OF BEST STORY. WITH THE HELP OF OUR LOCALIZATION STAFF, WE WERE ABLE TO RECREATE THE U.S. VERSION KEEPING ALL DETAILS OF THE ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION IN TACT, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY ENSURING THAT THE ENTIRE GAMING EXPERIENCE FIRST EXPERIENCED BY JAPANESE GAMERS WAS ONCE AGAIN ABLE TO BE EXPERIENCED BY U.S. GAMERS.



B Metal Gear Solid

RUNNERS UP: Oddworld: Abe's Exxodus, Final Fantasy Tactics, Bust A Groove

Although all our nominees featured impressive use of audio in one way or another, Abe with its voices woven right into the gameplay, Final Fantasy Tactics and Bust A Groove with their topnotch soundtracks, Metal Gear Solid stood out as the overall winner.

First and foremost, the voice-acting is amazing. After witnessing countless other games crippled and sometimes destroyed by shoddy, half-assed voice-overs presumably supplied by bible cartoon rejects, hearing an already incredible game like Metal Gear's fantastic voice work was refreshing indeed. The actors fit their roles, were enthusiastic without going overboard, and accomplished what real speech in a game is supposed to do—heighten the drama and draw the player further into a fantasy world.

But great use of audio is everywhere in Metal Gear, not just in the voices. The way a splash of a puddle or knock on the wall alerts guards, the jarring alarm when you are spotted, the stirring main theme and tension-building background music—all of these demonstrate a successful effort to use sound in every way possible to enhance gameplay.

ACCEPTED BY DAVID HAYTER, VOICE OF SOLID SNAKE

I WANT TO THANK *OPM* FOR ITS RECOGNITION OF METAL GEAR SOLID. I'M A BIG FAN OF THE GAME AND THE PEOPLE WHO PUT IT TOGETHER. THE DEDICATION TO MAKING THIS GAME INTO A FULLY CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE WAS TRULY IMPRESSIVE—THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THAT POSSIBLE.

THE REST OF '98 (CONT.)

MOST UNSTOPPABLE CHARACTER:

MR. DOMINO

You think you can stop him? Don't even front. You wouldn't be the first to try and you won't be the last to fail. Nothing can stop Mr. Domino–*nothing*.

LAME CONTRA GAME OF THE YEAR:

C: THE CONTRA ADVENTURE

You wouldn't think we'd need a category this specific–hell, we didn't a year ago. But if Konami insists on making a tradition out of trashing one of their previously finest game series, well, we will too.

WORST USE OF BRUCE WILLIS:

APOCALYPSE

Not that Apocalypse was a bad game by any means, but having Bruno as its celebrity lead didn't end up making that much of a difference. A few one-liners read like he's said them a thousand times before (which in most cases, he had) and a few short FMV snippets never really added up to much–at least not to the big hunk of cash he probably took home for his trouble.

SECOND WORST USE OF BRUCE WILLIS:

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Apparently the Apocalypse (or was that Armageddon, hmm...) contract prevented Willis' likeness from being used in any other games, because The Fifth Element has carefully edited the clips from the film so that he's not in any of them. Plus, the Korben Dallas character resembles Willis about as closely as Kraig's Fonzerelli jacket resembles a cow. Not that we're complaining, you understand...

ENOUGH SAID:

IRRITATING STICK

And last, and certainly least...

WORST GAME OF THE YEAR:

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Whooee, is this game bad! You know how when you touch something really, really cold, it burns? The Fifth Element is so damned bad that it's actually almost fun to play, because you just can't believe any game can be this bad.

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